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XBOX GAMER

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EXCLUSIVE REVIEW!

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

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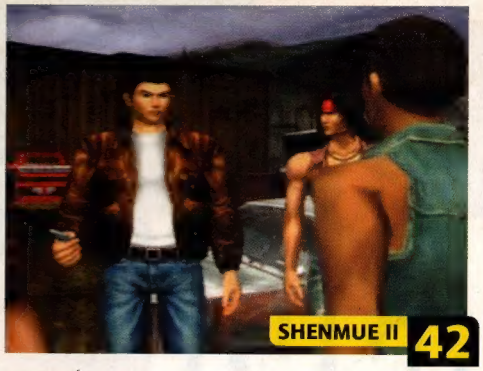

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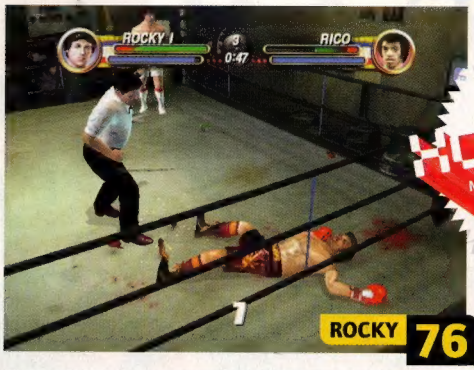

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status: exclusive

Microsoft buys *GoldenEye* developer Rare from Nintendo! For the full, undiluted truth, head for page 14.

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You simply will not believe these shots. Get all the juicy details right here in our fact-packed feature.

50 **SEGA GT 2002**
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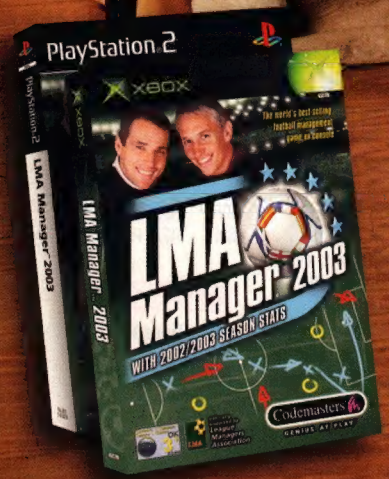
MASTER CHIEF GETS A NEW SUIT! Gizzard-rippling facts on *Halo 2*... lose your lunch with excitement on page 24.

CLIMAX OF THE SEASON

NEW for XBOX
THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING FOOTBALL MANAGEMENT GAME ON CONSOLE



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WIN! A HI-TECH DRIVING CHAIR!
Raise your racing game with an authentic driving seat! Page126

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Beware the minefield that is broadband! Step lively though... our fact-packed feature will help you negotiate your way to online gaming pleasure. Find out how to gear up for Xbox Live for minimum cash here.

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Like our mag? Got a comment? Or do you need to 'tek a radge' on an issue that's tweaking your squeakers? Tell the nation through the medium of letters.

116 **BURNING QUESTIONS**
Hardware issues? Surround sound queries? Girlfriend trouble? We enlighten you here. Apart from the last bit.

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Ensure that every month is like Christmas, by subscribing to our illustrious organ.

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Find out how to get a top job in gaming as we grill Joe Booth, development director of Bam Entertainment.

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Project Ego changes its name to *Fable*, and the brothers grim wax urinal on the joys of self-micturition.

126 **COMPETITION**
Net yourself a groovy racing chair, steering wheel, Xbox and racing game. Boss drum. Reach for the lasers.

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The only games-buying guide worth reading. Every Xbox game rated, to ensure you don't saddle yourself with 40 quid's worth of digital dog plop.

100 **STAYING ALIVE**
Top tippage. *Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX* ridden off the rails, *Silent Hill* demystified and *The Thing* toasted.

130 **BADVERT**
Tape up your specs and join the hippest, grooviest gang of scrotes around. If you like a lot of chocolate on your biscuit...

THE THING: TIPPED! IN STAYING ALIVE... 100

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105 PIPE DREAMS

Broadband: it's the word on everybody's lips, and the only medium capable of supporting Xbox Live. Find out how to get it and what the best deals are in our high-bandwidth feature...

>> cash for questions

THE COST
Connection fees, monthly charges and hidden costs.

THE HARDWARE
How it works, the cables you'll need, and what that broadband technician will do to make it all work.

THE BENEFITS
What broadband'll do for you: Xbox Live, Internet radio, MP3 tunes, faster downloads...

DO NOT MISS...

HALO 2 The trailer has been released! Join us as we dissect it, frame by adrenaline-lashed frame... **Page 24**

COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 The flying scotsman is back... and how. Get the beef on... **Page 68**

THOUSANDS OF FRAGGING LOONS LOCKED IN BLOODY BATTLE THANKS TO THE EYE-BOILING POWER OF XBOX. *HALO 2* LOBS YOU INTO A BITTER FIGHT FOR EARTH'S SURVIVAL...

Microsoft continues to hoover up the best games developers on the planet. Soon the world's beefiest console will be festooned with killer titles. Everyone should own an Xbox.

21 DAMNED STRAIGHT REVIEWS

SHIPS AHOY This is just one of the many glistening Covenant ships attempting a full-scale invasion of our beloved planet Earth.

XGAMER

editor's letter

I get the feeling a few more eyes are scanning these words than usual. Is it because the rampant thrill-plumpness of this month's **XGamer** simply has to be groped to be believed? An irresistible issue awash with exclusive reviews like *Sega GT* and *Colin McRae Rally*—titles that'll rekindle your love affair with Xbox faster than a night of roleplay in a Travel Lodge. Or is it because only **XGamer** has thought to scour the globe for every last trace of *Halo 2*? Bringing the knowledge to boil in a feature so droolworthy you'll need a boat. Perhaps the newcomers have heard that only **XGamer** will push past the corporate BS to discover what taking your Xbox online really means. How much does broadband cost? What does it actually do and what are the pitfalls? Then again, maybe word is out that only **XGamer** will man the late-night wires to Tokyo and Seville—revealing Blizzard's Xbox debut (Hello *StarCraft*) and asking what Microsoft's purchase of Rare really means. Our pursuit of Xbox truth take us around the world but now terminates in London. Our corporate masters have decided to move their **XGamer** piece to the Capital. And the current team have decided life in the Big Choke is not for them. So it's goodbye to most of the people who've made this magazine what it is. Christian, Niki, Claire, Lee, Al, Zy and myself, among others. Though Curley will still be here, flying the flag for **XGamer** next month. In truth, Xbox has always been about the future. I, for one, can't wait to see what happens.

Mark Donald Editor
xgamer@fxmi.com

select

14 **MICROSOFT SNAFFLES RARE**
From the makers of *GoldenEye, Perfect Dark* and *Conker's Bad Fur Day* comes a promise to only make Xbox games.

76 **ROCKY**
Our reviews section is jammed with stone cold stunners, but this licenced boxing beauty really packs a punch...

105 **PIPE DREAMS**
Want Xbox Live? Baffled by broadband? Discover the joys and pit-falls of ultra-fast net access in our huge feature.

TURN OVER AND FEEL THE GAMES...

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GOING UNDER Has the Covenant chosen Australia for its assault on Earth? "First we take Erinsborough, then... the world!"

BOMB RAP These gargantuan explosions show the raw power of the alien force. Each blast looks like it could flatten a metropolis.

BOARD STUPID Master Chief plans to land on a Covenant ship and then attempt to board. Here's hoping they brought their non-slip cruisers.

GAME_HALO 2

WHAT, NO PARACHUTE?

SCENE Earth under attack. Master Chief under equipped. Pants under pressure.
WEAPON One sniper pistol, one assault rifle, and four plasma grenades. Yaaaah!
FEELING I can see my residential biosphere from here...

WANT SOME MORE?
PAGE 24 FOR THE EYE-FRAZZLING FEATURE

first contact

We invite future sparklers to share our bonfire...

TRUE FANTASY LIVE ONLINE

CEL, CEL, CEL! It's hard not to love *True Fantasy*'s highly-polished cel-shaded visuals, making it look like some bonkers anime cartoon. Let's pray that the game itself is suitably Japanese and baffling.

- Enormous cel-shaded anime world
- Fight monsters, ride horses, go fishing
- Fabulously oxymoronic title

MMORPG is probably the most hideous acronym ever to assault the gaming world. Nevertheless, Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games are quite interesting, as you'll soon discover when Xbox Live happens round these parts and Sega start trying to flog you *Phantasy Star Online*. But who wants an old Dreamcast-off when there's something new and shiny in development, especially for Xbox?

True Fantasy Live Online's the game in question, featuring a gert big online world in which you seem pretty much free to live an exciting new existence, unfettered by the poxy restrictions of meatspace. You can reinvent yourself as an almond-eyed manga-type character and then go off and do whatever the hell you want. Obviously, there's the option of ganging up with other adventurers and wandering off to bash monsters, but that's a mere fraction of the experience on offer. If excitement's too much for you, why not forge yourself an exciting new cyber-career as, say, a blacksmith, or, er, fisherman, whiling away your hours in blissful virtual solitude?

True Fantasy's cel-shaded looks are self-evident; what's got us puzzled is the means of communicating with other players. Microsoft tells us that you'll chat through the Voice Commander headset, but the screenshots show characters with little speech bubbles coming out of their heads. What's going on there, then? Some kind of groovy speech-to-text conversion? If it works it could be great; if it doesn't, some hilarious mistranslations could ensue.

Level-5 is working on the Japanese version at the moment; doubtless, it'll do the American version next and we'll be last to get a look-in. But with the release date down as 2003, there shouldn't be long to wait.

Developer Level-5 Inc
Publisher Microsoft
Release 2003
Genre MMORPG
For more... 0870 601 0100 www.xbox.com

Getting ready for war? Looks like someone fell chin-first in a dog egg and didn't realise.

Every one of these characters is, in real life, a heavily sweating 40-year-old man. Sobering, no?

TRACK RECORD

Level-5, eh? Not to be confused with Eighties' adventure creators Level 9. Or pop heartthrobs Another Level. Which all leads to the point that Level-5 is completely new to us, and its only title to make it to these shores is a PS2 RPG called *Dark Cloud*, which seems to have been well-received.

>> **GOOD**
Dark Cloud
(PS2, 2001)

It's bad luck to pass people on the stairs. Especially when they're carrying a large kitchen knife.

Show us another game where you ride a bizarre dragon/Tauntaun hybrids. Erm... apart from *Final Fantasy*.

STARCRAFT GHOST

- Super sci-fi sneaking
- Tactical espionage combat
- Not a boring old RTS

OOH, CRAFTY!
StarCraft Ghost is a single player title, but remains true to its heritage by making it quite clear that you're part of a larger war. Massed battles await!

A *StarCraft* title isn't the obvious hot new game to get excited about, is it? But exhale a cloud of sweet-scented relief; this isn't *StarCraft* itself, but a sneaky tactical action title set in the *StarCraft* universe. The 'Ghost' bit is something *StarCraft* fans will recognise; Ghosts are highly trained covert units with psionic powers, cloaking fields and high-powered rifles, capable of knobbling mechanical units and calling in nuclear strikes. This is your chance to step into their blood-spattered space boots.

Much of *StarCraft Ghost* will be made up of *Metal Gear*-style sneaky action, with Nova, the game's highly-trained heroine, engaging in hardcore infiltration. Creeping past guards is made easy with Nova's cloaking field, although if you need to move fast, she can shift at hypersonic speeds for bullet time craziness. She's massively agile, too—able to climb fences, hang from ledges, walk tightropes... Such skills nudge *Starcraft Ghost* into platformer territory at times.

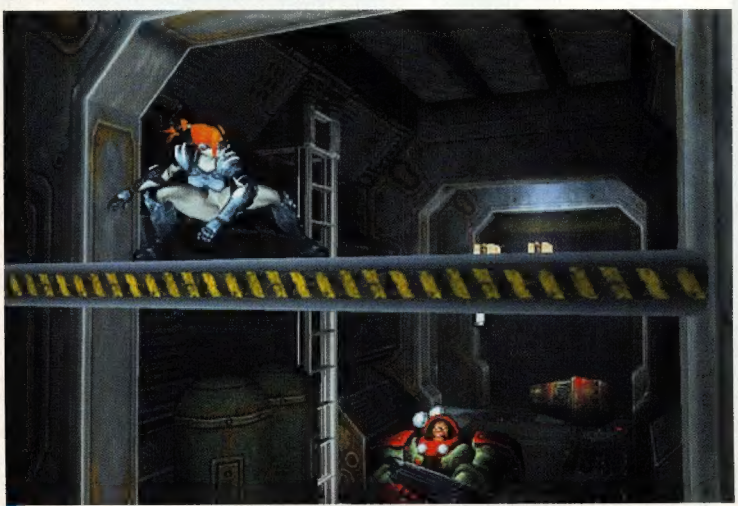
And, yeah, before you ask, you *will* be able to call in tactical nuclear strikes. Just don't stand too close when they go off, okay?

Developer Blizzard/Nihilistic
Publisher Vivendi
Release End 2003
Genre Stealth/action
For more... 0118 920 9100 www.blizzard.com

When stealth fails, the all-out blazing guns approach is a viable option.

It's all kicking off. Nova appears to be hiding on a far-off gantry. Sensible lass.

Is she pouncing? Or merely cadging a leg-up so she can fix that strip light?


Nova proves her impressive stealth credentials. She ought to invest in a bottle of shadowy black hair dye, though...

Aim for the soft, fleshy bits. Not the heavily-armoured bony bits. Oh, and avoid those gargantuan claws. Obviously.

TRACK RECORD

Blizzard isn't usually associated with an exciting blend of stealth and shooting; it's steeped in the world of real-time strategy and role-playing. Luckily, the company's recruited Nihilistic to co-develop *Starcraft Ghost*; unluckily Nihilistic's biggest title to date is the average *Vampire: The Masquerade*.

>> **COOL AS...**

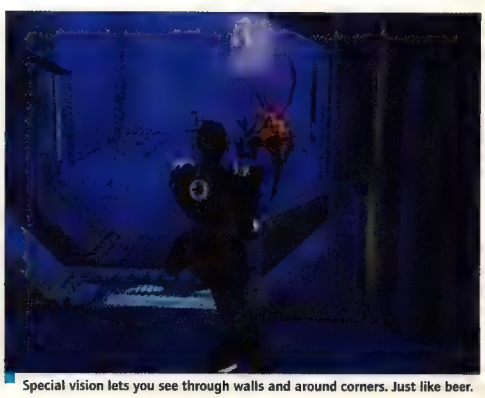
Warcraft (PC, 1994)
Diablo, (PC, 1996)
Warcraft 2 (PC, 2001)
Warcraft 3 (PC 2002)

>> **SLIGHTLY SLUSHY**

Diablo 2 (PC, 2000)
Starcraft (PC, 1998)

That's the biggest set of lava lamps we've seen. Be wary of giant hippies...

Space fashions never seem to progress beyond that 'gaudy and lumpy' look.



Special vision lets you see through walls and around corners. Just like beer.

first contact

SUDEKI

- An epic quest of magic and swordplay
- Real-time battling with tag-team moves
- Three worlds rammed with beasts and buddies and, er, baddies

With *Final Fantasy* still making waves on PS2, Microsoft has announced *Sudeki*, a gaggingly good-looking RPG set to beat all-comers if these awesome early shots are to be believed.

Xbox ONLY!

From a third-person view, you leg it around a fantasy environment, chatting to locals, taking on mini-quests and discovering the dark truth about your party members (there's a surprise). You can also scope the horizon in first-person mode to locate hidden cave entrances and mystical dungeons.

INTELLIGENT TESTIMONY

Unlike *Final Fantasy*, *Sudeki* features real-time battling as you flick control between up to four characters to hammer the forces of naughtiness. The action never stops—even when you access your inventory to pull out a health potion or swap weapons. During menu access, events move in 'bullet time', which looks especially gratifying when you land an impressive tag team magic trick. Each of these special assaults relates to the combination of characters undertaking them. How you'll laugh as the baddies leg it before being frazzled by an H-bomb-sized blast.

But wait, there's a tactical element, too. As you control one character, you instruct your pals to adopt one of four attitudes, reflecting their personality and skills. You can tell leader Tal, for instance, to act as a bodyguard to a weaker member of your party.

This could be a good 'un.

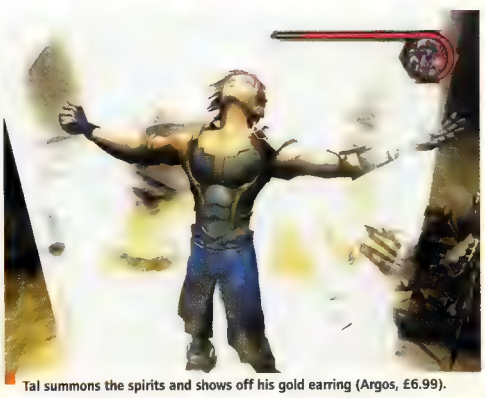
- **Developer** Climax
- **Publisher** Microsoft
- **Release** Christmas 2003
- **Genre** RPG
- **For more...** 0870 601 0100 www.xbox.com

Surrounded by twisted foes, our heroes deploy magic and strong-arm tactics.

A spirit attack is both spectacular and devastating. This poor blighter doesn't stand a chance.

The 'kiss my arse' taunt might look amusing, but this fella isn't laughing.

Shielding magic will ward off all baddies and boost you defensive skills.



Tal summons the spirits and shows off his gold earring (Argos, £6.99).

TRACK RECORD

Climax has been in the business since 1988. It's the conversion king, producing versions of classics such as *Theme Park World* and *Populous: The Beginning*. Many of its titles have met with a cool reception from punters, but its latest effort is shaping up to be a blockbuster.

>> **GOOD**
Diablo (PC, 1997)

>> **AVERAGE**
Robot Wars: Arenas Of Destruction (PC, PS2, 2001)
Warcraft 2: The Dark Saga (PS1, 1997)

Since *Battlestar Galactica* was cancelled, work has been scare for the Cylons.

This is the first level boss you'll face. Look at the size of that thing...

You need to get out of the way of this mighty blade. See it swoosh!

trace ultimate acquisition

RARE SNARED

Microsoft snaffles Twyford's top export from under Nintendo's nostrils.

Microsoft picked its XO2 event in Seville to finally announce the news that most pundits had already guessed at: it's coughed up £240 million for the jewel in Nintendo's crown, top Britsoft developer Rare, creator of N64 classics such as *GoldenEye, Perfect Dark, Blast Corps.*

It's a sweet deal for Microsoft; Rare's previous titles have sold an average of 1.4 million copies, and the games it has in development look set to continue that trend. Amazingly, Rare is slated to have an Xbox game out early next year, the previously-for-Gamecube *Kameo: Elements Of Power*, (see right). And due to follow at some point in the future is *Perfect Dark 2*, the sequel to the N64 shooter and a prime candidate for hardcore Xbox Live compatability. In total, Rare is committed to five games over the next two years across all top genres.

Rare and Microsoft are rather pleased with the deal—a fact made clear by Rare's normally taciturn chairman, Chris Stamper, telling us: "Games are our life. Xbox is the best development environment we've ever experienced." Aww.

There's been some worry about which game series Rare would be able to continue developing, but it turns out that the only ones it'll lose are the Nintendo-owned *Donkey Kong* and *Starfox*. And Chris hinted strongly at an Xbox rebirth for an old favourite: "We still own the Sabre Man character. Hint. Hint."

Rare's most famous characters join their creators Tim and Chris Stamper, along with Microsoft's Ed Fries at the recent Xbox event (XO2) in Seville.

briefs

Steel Battalion *Steel Battalion* is set for a US release in November at a cost of $199.95. The European price looks set to be £200 (that's around £140). Meanwhile, in Japan, gamers have been settling down to *Steel Battalion* sessions with their customary enthusiasm. Some have created complex structures to house their controllers and ramp up the realism levels... Check out this web link for more info: www.elotrolado.net/showthread.php?t=&postid=659073#post659073

WIRED> *Metal Gear Solid 3* is rumoured to be Xbox exclusive > Possible *MGS3* preview peek on *MGS: Substance* > *Battlefield Pizza Girl* coming

WIRED> Sega unveil *Chihiro*, an arcade machine based on the Xbox

select

16 **CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 02/03**
It's big, it's beautiful, and it's coming your way.

16 **ARTISTIC GAME LICENCE**
Tom Baker wraps up his scarf, and travels through time to kick manky alien arse across the galaxy.

16 **WRESTLING ROUNDUP**
WWE Raw 2 and *The Wild Rings* lumber over the horizon towards us..

18 **XBOX LIVE UK**
The truth, the cost, the glory! If you want to get online, here's everything you need to know.

18 **ONLINE CHARGE**
A lip-jiggling list of some of the games you can expect to play over Xbox Live.

18 **AGENT X**
Truths and secrets from the less-travelled streets of gamesville.

19 **N.U.D.E.**
Grow your own AI, courtesy of the Japanese. Mad but true...

19 **CHARTS**
What's hot and not so, er, hot.

19 **BREAKDOWN**
First-person action courtesy of Namco, with a peculiarly punchy approach...

20 **SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 2: DOUBLE HELIX**
Notoriously gore-spattered FPS levels its sights at Xbox gamers. It'll be naughty but nice.

21 **BLACK & WHITE**
Molyneux's monster island is shaping up to be a cracker. Get the skinny right here.

21 **DEAD OR ALIVE CODE CHRONOS**
The **XGamer** bloodhounds are hot on the trail of the sequel to last year's finest beater.

20 NEW GAMES REVEALED!

trace fairy story

KAMEO

Rare's first Xbox game and it's almost finished.

We're used to having to wait a long time for Rare stuff, so the news that *Kameo: Elements Of Power* is to appear early next year is surprising, to say the least, especially given that Rare is said to have only had Xbox development hardware for a few months.

So, Rare's first Xbox game. You might expect 'em to go for a guaranteed crowd-pleaser such as *Perfect Dark*, but *Kameo*'s a whole new game with some oddball twists. For starters, you play as the titular Kameo, a fairy princess. *Right...*

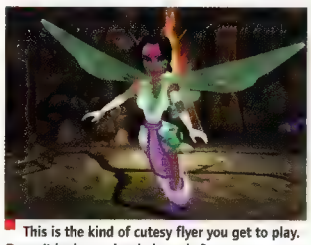
The action kicks off with evil dark power getting released and threatening the land of the fairies, and typically it's Kameo alone who can save the day. It looks like the sort of third-person romp that Rare's been doing wonderfully for years, but there are extra elements in this Xbox offering. Kameo might be a lone fairy, but she can capture, develop and control the wild beasts of the fairy land. She starts off able to control cute ickle baby monsterlings, but as the game goes on she's able to make use of titanic behemoths in her quest to do away with the evil Thorn.

The 'Elements' bit comes from the fact that the different monsters she can control—or transform into—fall into one of six elemental fields: fire, water, wind, plant, ice and rock, each having its own role in the battle.

There's already a movie preview online at **ftp://209.164.21.30/pub/misc/rare_sequence.mov.** We'll take a closer look in the near future; though it'll be interesting to see if Rare keeps to its deadline.

Who Rare
When Early 2003

Once you've earned your advanced fairy wings you'll be able to control terrifying beasts. Grr.


This is the kind of cutesy flyer you get to play. Doesn't look very hard, does she?

briefs

ROGUE JUSTICE
Developer Gorilla [illegible] staggering new mech game, due [illegible] Xbox Live support. [illegible] essentially a first-person shooter, but the glorious twist is that you can [illegible] stamped on a nearby roof by destroying the building [illegible]

trace madame jo-jo

PERFECT DARK 2

Miss Dark's been given an animé makeover for her Xbox debut.

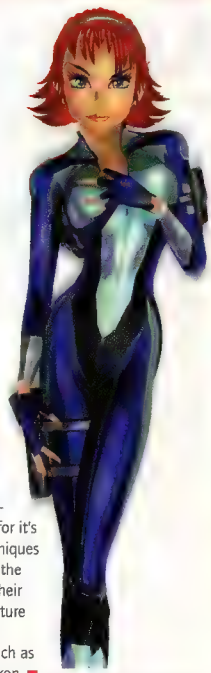
A sequel to the brilliant *Perfect Dark* has been Rare's worst-kept secret ever since the first game came out on the N64. What we weren't expecting was that the sequel would eventually turn up on the Xbox and not on the Gamecube. Talk about a pleasant surprise, eh?

After scoring a massive hit with *GoldenEye 007*, Rare turned down the lucrative Bond licence and came up with its own story and characters rather than produce a sequel. So Bond was swapped for Joanna Dark, Her Majesty's Secret Service ditched in favour of the shadowy Carrington Institute, and a whole new bunch of weapons and spy gadgets were drafted in to beef up an already awesome and original arsenal.

While Rare's keeping quiet about the sequel, the one obvious thing is that for *Perfect Dark 2* it's doing away with the realistic looks of the original and going for an eye-catching animé style.

Should be an interesting sight in a first-person shooter, that's assuming *Perfect Dark 2* actually turns out to be a first-person shooter. Rare might change its mind and turn the sequel into a third-person sneak-'em-up. The company is known for it's experimental development techniques and for pushing originality over the safer staples of gaming. Given their pedigree, however, such a departure seems highly unlikely

Typically, there's not so much as a sniff of a release date. We reckon late 2003 at the earliest, but we'll keep you posted...


This sultry looking special agent is targeting an Xbox debut some time next year.

> Microsoft to release tiny joypad—the Controller S—in the UK on 1 November for £24.99 > PC shooter *Raiden Fighters* slated for Xbox

WIRED> Konami snap up rights for *Godzilla* and *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles*

briefs

Warlords Offered

Hackers group, The Linux Project, has successfully installed the Windows 2000 operating system on an Xbox, using Linux coding. As well as playing Mpeg movies, the group has been able to run Windows applications such as Microsoft Office.

trace title defence

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 02/03

XGAMER exclusive

Championship Manager Season 02/03 will only appear on Xbox. They're not even doing a damned PC version.

New season update announcement softens bad news of lengthy *Champ 4* delay.

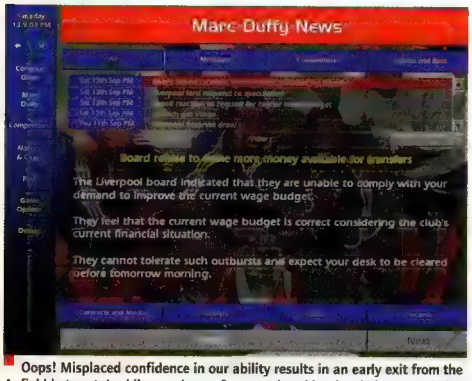
The latest season update of the hardcore, text-based football management sim, *Championship Manager,* is set for an exclusive Xbox release this Christmas. *Championship Manager Season 02/03* follows the brilliantly crafted, but average selling *01/02* Xbox version.

As well as the customary updating and expansion of the player, staff and team updates, there are a few new tricks to turn the eye of interested scouts. When a goal is scored, for instance, the joypad vibrates to simulate your panicky palpitations as the Premiership crown hoves into view or relegation looms.

The development team has also added the South Korean league and implemented changes to world league structures, transfer systems and rules.

The reason for the update, according to Miles Jacobson managing director of Sports Interactive, is to "give people a chance to play *Champ Man* with these season's stats." Jacobson went on to confirm that *CM4*, the long-awaited full sequel in the series, will not hit Xbox this season due to development delays for the PC versions and the time required to turn around a top Xbox version.

Who Eidos
When 22 November



Oops! Misplaced confidence in our ability results in an early exit from the Anfield hot-seat. Luckily our chance for a reprieve hits the shelves at Crimbo.

Yep, the boys from *WWE* are to return. Just as soon as they turn that tractor beam on the roof off.

trace double piledriver

WRESTLE MANIA

Two new titles mean a good time for grapple fans.

Feeling ready to rumble? Keen to enact the inevitable result of putting large, oiled men in shiny Spandex? Splendid news, because two whole new wrestling games are on their way to Xbox.

In the blue corner we have *The Wild Rings*, fresh out of Microsoft Game Studios. While it doesn't feature a single genuine wrestling licence, it does have a wide range of wrestling styles covering a lot more than the average US offerings. So while the characters are either made up or 'inspired by' actual wrestlers (there's also a 'make your own wrestler' option), the kind of action you'll be able to get out of them should prove new and exciting as you pit, for example, old-skool grappling against kick-boxing.

The Wild Rings is mainly aimed at the Japanese and features Xbox Live compatability on top of the usual modes; it's not clear as to whether it'll make its way over here, though.

Meanwhile, if you prefer your wrestling to have a more official slant then you'll doubtless be gagging to know that THQ has announced *WWE Raw 2*, the sequel to–who'd have thought it–*WWE Raw*. Details are skimpier than Triple-H's pants at the moment, but we confidently expect it to feature in the region of 50 wrestlers and a lot more match types than *Raw* ever had to offer, including a hell in a cell match. Now that, quite possibly, is hardcore Further details to follow next month. Possibly.

Who THQ and Microsoft
When 2003

Rings don't come much wilder than this. "Go on, put your mitts up, tiger!"

WIRED> PC battler, *One Must Fall: Battlegrounds* coming to Xbox

ARTISTIC GAME LICENCE

NO.7 TOM BAKER'S UFC: TIMETROTTING TAPOUT

The pitch

Like *UFC*, but Tom Bakered. Take the thespian through round-based fisticuffs, fighting horrific Doctor Who baddies.

The tagline

"Foul time & space-slags, Gertcha!"

The game

Take to the bareknuckle stage as the bombastic Baker and hack your way down the treacherous path to fighting immortality. Tooled up with a double scoop of fists of fury, you'll be able to crack heads like a giant with a hammer gone barmy at a robot fancy dress party. Starting off in present day Wolverhampton, whacking a minion Dalek with a chair for giving it verbals, you'll unlock timezones by kicking sci-fi-goons to kingdom-come before finally reaching the king-donkey in the maniac rodeo–Davros. Weaken him down by shouting with a booming voice before uppercutting his top-half from his dalek-like arse-holder.

Secrets

Kill the four cantankerous cybermen in under two minutes and unlock the hidden multiplayer mode–TARDIS time trial. In this, you get to smash a TARDIS to bits with a very hard golf club.

Optional extras

- Multi-coloured scarf for moral support
- Rumbling Davros arse-cup (expensive)

NEXT MONTH

Mark Donald's Jedi Outcast

it's

what

lies

ahead

Fully detailed actual in-game model

colin mcrae rally 3™

onedriveronecareeronehundredandfiftydecisionsaminute

Race as Colin McRae with the Ford Rallye Sport Team

Race against the clock - 56 stages, 8 countries, 18 licensed cars

Dynamic, crash damage system

Outstanding environmental phsysics

Out Now

XBOX PlayStation.2

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WIRED> Empire to release game of hit comic and soon-to-be movie, *Bulletproof Monk*.

Sega plan to release an Xbox compatible keyboard to go with *Phantasy Star Online*. They'll also charge an extra monthly fee to play. In Japan it's ¥600, which works out as £3.12.

trace alive and kicking

XBOX LIVE UK

Price £39.99 **Date** 14 March 2003.

PIPE DREAMS See p.105 for our complete guide to broadband.

briefs

Content Check Tons of new online games have just been announced. Here are a few highlights: Vivendi is doing a *Lord Of The Rings* online RPG. *Fishing Live* will enable voice chat with other anglers. Capcom's old skool beat-'em-up *Capcom VS SNK 2 EO* is Xbox Live compatible. Best of all, *Splinter Cell* will have online features. Though it won't be playable online, you'll be able to download maps and other unspecified [illegible]

Here's the skinny: Europe's online Xbox gaming arena throws open its doors for multiplayer aggro on **14 March 2003**.

To take part, you must have a broadband Internet connection, a credit/debit card and an Xbox Live Starter kit costing **£39.99**. This kit is essentially a subscription to Xbox Live that gives you 12 months unmetered playing time (which works out at **£3.33** per month). It also includes a starter disc for unlocking Xbox's online software, a headset (for online voice communication) and demo versions of *Moto GP Online* and *Whacked*. Xbox Live will launch in the UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Holland and Sweden.

Microsoft is also confident there will be at least **five games available** from 30 November. *Unreal Championship, Mech Assault, Ghost Recon, Whacked* and *Moto GP*. Why November? Well, if you live in the UK, France or Germany then you can sneak on to Xbox Live from 30 October 2002. Microsoft is going to test the service by conducting a limited 'Beta Test' that will iron out any bugs and gather vital gamer feedback. This will be accessible to 3,000 selected gamers who sign up for the Beta Test programme. Go to: **www.xbox.com/uk/live/betasignup** now.

The trial phase is then expanded from 30 November. This is called the 'Test Drive' and is another Beta Test accessible to anyone who wants to play. Just order a Test Drive starter pack from **www.xbox.com/uk** to get onboard. This is just like the full starter kit, so it still entitles you to a full year of Xbox Live play. Except those 12 months won't kick in until 14 March, so effectively you get three and a half month's free play.

The final phase is the full launch of the service on 14 March 2003. By then the bugs should be squished and we should all be spanking live human opponents from here to Berlin. Can't wait.

Who Microsoft

When 30 October onwards

Introducing: *Whacked*, a crazy combat game. And another freebie you get with your starter pack.

The Test Drive Kit in its entirety—all you need now are some online Beta pals to play with.

A cut down version of *Moto GP* comes with your start-up kit. Quite generous, that.

agent x

More exclusives from our man in Seville...

The world of international gaming espionage is not as glamourous as you'd expect. My latest mission took me to a top secret location in Spain. La Isla Magica is a theme park by day, but doubles as a venue for exclusive corporate shindigs by night.

I managed to sneak onto the Microsoft guest list and positioned myself behind one Peter Molyneux on the rollercoaster. When he wasn't blowing chunks of under-cooked chicken kebab, he was blowing the lid on future projects. He even mentioned his furtive plans for **Fable 2**, an online sequel to his forthcoming RPG blockbuster.

Talking of premature ejaculations, it turns out Climax is in pre-production with its Xbox Live RPG sequel, **Sudeki 2**.

My Seville jolly also allowed me to catch up with some Japanese counterparts, who let slip on the log flume. Apparently, Microsoft is sniffing around **Capcom**, with a view to making the *Resident Evil*-spewing company its latest acquisition. The Japanese contingent were also keen to harass attending Microsoft big-wigs about a rumoured **Sega mini Xbox** for the Far East.

While others got hammered on free booze, I spent much of the evening squatting in the toilet cubicles. As a result, I overheard Microsoft cheerleader Ed Fries chatting about Bungie's ability to make motorcycle workings look fantastic for **Halo 2**. Cheers, Ed.

Well, I'm home now. And just in time to pick up a coded message from Vivendi suggesting the imminent arrival of **Judge Dredd Vs Judge Death**, a mean-ass first-person shooter. Agent X out

WIRED> Vivendi gets new

charts

Xbox top 10

Halo not number one? *Hunter* still anywhere near the charts? Stare in utter bewilderment...

#	GAME NAME	XGAMER	VERDICT
1 (New entry) →	**TUROK EVOLUTION** Acclaim **Acclaim**	7/10	RENT
2 (1) ↓	**HALO** Bungie **Microsoft**	9/10	BUY!
3 (New entry) →	**BRUCE LEE: QUEST OF THE DRAGON** Universal Interactive **VU Interactive Publishing**	3/10	CHOP!
4 (2) ↓	**PROJECT GOTHAM RACING** Microsoft **Microsoft**	9/10	BUY!
5 (5) –	**DEAD OR ALIVE 3** Tecmo **Microsoft**	9/10	BUY!
6 (4) ↓	**PRISONER OF WAR** Wide Games **Codemasters**	7/10	RENT
7 (3) ↓	**MAX PAYNE** Remedy **Take 2**	9/10	BUY!
8 (6) ↓	**CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 01/02** Sports Interactive **Eidos**	9/10	BUY!
9 (7) ↓	**007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE** Electronic Arts **Electronic Arts**	6/10	RENT
10 (8) ↓	**HUNTER: THE RECKONING** High Voltage **Virgin**	3/10	WHY??

KEY →Slam Dunkin' ↑Moving Up ↓Sliding Down –Non Mover

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4. This voucher is redeemable against Xbox games only.
5. Only one voucher may be used per product.
6. This voucher cannot be redeemed against a pre-owned purchase
7. This offer may be withdrawn at any time without prior notice.
8. This voucher is valid until 12 November 2002

GAME www.game-uk.com XGAMER

SALES OF THE UNEXPECTED

...before breathing a sigh of relief as Master Chief is plonked back where he belongs.

1 (1) –	HALO Bungie **Microsoft**
2 (Re entry) →	PROJECT GOTHAM RACING Bizarre Creations **Microsoft**
3 (2) ↓	PRISONER OF WAR Wide Games **Codemasters**
4 (Re entry) →	MAX PAYNE Remedy **Take 2**
5 (Re entry) →	GUNMETAL Rage **Rage**

trace tech-heads

N.U.D.E.

Grow-your-own artificial intelligence.

Japanese developer Red Entertainment is currently working on a startling piece of software that'll be compatible with the Xbox voice communicator. *N.U.D.E.*, or *Natural Ultimate Digital Project*, puts you in charge of an AI experiment where you teach a human-interface intelligence to become more human. And, no, that doesn't mean it'll make the tea, clean your bedroom or buff the family jewels to a high shine.

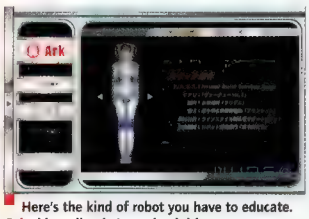
Dubbed a 'robot life simulation', *N.U.D.E.* enables you to actually speak to the intelligence using the Xbox voice communicator, teaching it to perform tasks and react in certain ways. There's some very clever speech recognition software involved. The game contains a database of basic terms, which the software, developed by I-Value Studio, is capable of recognising. In this way, your P.A.S.S. (Personal Assist Secretary System—a fancy name for your pet AI, basically) can understand the words you say and act upon them.

To begin with, all she can do is parrot the words that you give her. But through repetition and elaboration, you'll soon be able to teach your charge how to express herself, laugh, become angry, and feel other specific emotions. Red Entertainment is looking at a Spring 2003 release in Japan. Lets hope it makes it over here.

Who Red Entertainment
When Next year

briefs

CLASSICAL TALES Greece has lifted its ban on videogames, provided no gambling is involved. Meanwhile, in Italy, the Anti-Mafia Commission is up in arms over Illusion Software's Mafia titles, soon for the Xbox.



Here's the kind of robot you have to educate. Coincidentally, she's a schoolgirl-type.

And here's an official poster showing your robot in another virginal pose. So that acronym isn't just a crass publicity stunt then?

trace fist of fury

BREAKDOWN

Namco unveils intriguing 'fist-person shooter.'

status: first shots — Here's your first look at a game that's promising to be... well, it's not promised anything yet.

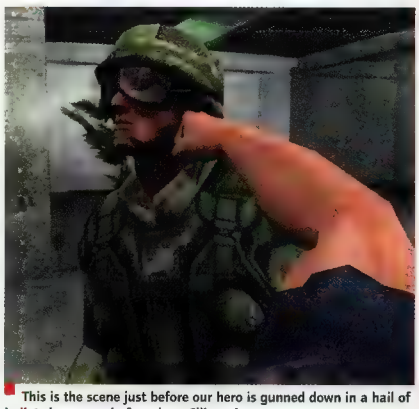
Well, it's called *Breakdown* and it's coming from Namco. What, you need to know more? Well, apart from a small handful of screenshots, that's just about the only information we have on this one, described—helpfully—as an action adventure in the vein of *Dead To Rights*, but with more fisting thrown in for good measure.

It all appears to be done from a first-person viewpoint, which should make things interesting since, historically, melée action almost *never* works in a first-person perspective. Guns work fine; fists, swords, clubs and pointy sticks with nails hammered through the end really don't, excepting the rifle butt attacks in *Halo*.

Putting aside the worries about how the game mechanics will pan out—we'll soon be able to have a play and let you know in the near future—the little we've seen of *Breakdown* suggests it's well worth keeping an eye on, with exceedingly swish visuals and more than a hint of *The Matrix* about it. This one has got the rumour-mongers drooling.

Come back real soon for the lowdown on this enigmatic slice of action.

Who Namco
When 2003



This is the scene just before our hero is gunned down in a hail of bullets by a squad of marines. Silly sod.

Tarantino movie licence, *Kill Bill* > Bruce Lee compo... winner—Julie Theaker from Sheffield. Runners up—Qi Chen, Bhevesh Mistry and Rob Storr.

Silent as a whisper

PC CD-ROM

Ubi Soft

A fire-fight gets well messy. Looks like you and your mate are coming out on top though.

brace mercenary

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE 2

Gore-streaked PC shooter lurches onto the 'box.

The aptly-named Gratuitous Games is currently pouring its development energies into an Xbox version of the PC first-person shooter, *Soldier Of Fortune 2: Double Helix.*

As John Mullins, ex-special forces op turned idealistic gun-for-hire, the game throws you into various global hotspots, where you infiltrate enemy territory and gun down hordes of fanatical terrorists. The single-player game will remain largely as it was in the PC version. However, the multi-player options will be pretty vast, as publisher Activision has confirmed that the game will be Xbox Live compatible.

With a variety of deathmatch and team-play modes, shredding mates over the Internet should be a giggle. In addition, the game uses the infamous GHOUL engine. This graphical gib generator endows in-game characters with 26 distinct vulnerable 'gore zones', blow uppable body parts you can shoot, mangle and generally mutilate to horrific effect. At the very least, we reckon the game will carry a 15 rating. What else would you expect from a title that lets you split ripe skulls open along horizontal or vertical axes?

A handful of combat-light stealth missions provides a welcome break from the intense gunplay, made doubly tense by the fact that, if you're rumbled, things tend to go haywire. All in all, a varied and detailed shooter, but definitely not for those of a nervous disposition.

Who Activision

When 2003

You're so close to this potential victim, you're gonna need a cloth to wipe his brains off your barrel.

WIRED> New Xboxes redesigned to thwart mod-chips and hackers.

trace monochromatic

BLACK & WHITE

New direction for Lionhead's acclaimed god-game on Xbox.

status: first shots

This is the first ever genuine Xbox image of Black & White. Looks rather nice, doesn't it?

One picture. One measly picture. That's all Lionhead had to show of *Black & White* at XO2, but it at least gives us a tiny glimpse of what to expect.

This time you're a character in the world rather than some floaty deity, and the game's been changed substantially to allow for this. Most important is the revised role of your creature (a lion, cow or ape are current options). You get to sit on his back and ride around the land on a quest to—yep—get those pesky villagers to worship you.

The underlying game dynamics remain unchanged, however: get the villagers to worship you to boost your powers and strengthen your creature. But then this version packs in a lot more action; Lionhead talks of casting miracles, solving puzzles and fighting creatures. Sounds more fun than shunting wood around all day, that's for sure.

Who Lionhead
When 2003

You *must* have special powers if you can ride around in the snow topless. His nipples must be like bullets.

trace more soft porn

DEAD OR ALIVE: CODE CHRONOS

Tecmo hints that fighting sequel will be a compilation.

With *DOA Xtreme Volleyball* causing quite a stir, news of next year's potentially mind-boggling sequel to *Dead Or Alive 3* has been surprisingly thin on the ground. We do know it will be called *Dead Or Alive: Code Chronos* though and naturally Tecmo reckon it'll take beat-'em-ups to new graphical and gameplay heights.

The latest rumours suggest that, rather than being a full sequel, *Code Chronos* will be an updated compilation of all the *Dead Or Alive* games, with extras. Taking into account all versions, that would mean the sequel would feature over 40 levels, 20 characters and 300 costumes.

Tecmo big-wig Tomonobu Itagaki remains cagey about details. In interviews at the Tokyo Games Show, he would only confirm that *Code Chronos* will, "defy everyone's expectations". He then went on to explain, rather obtusely, that the game would represent a "thank you" to fans of the series. "It will fulfil every *Dead Or Alive* fan's dream," Itagaki continued, fuelling rumours of a huge retro-skew.

The biggest clue is, of course, the reference to time in the title. Could Itagaki-san be running out of ideas?

Who Tecmo
When 2003

A player limbers up in the celebration of feminism that is *Dead Or Alive Xtreme Volleyball*.

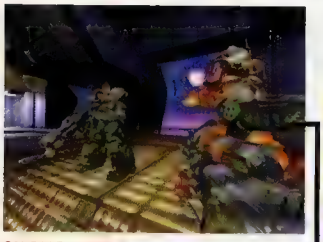
***Dead Or Alive 3* was the reason, "many people bought the machine," according to Itagaki.**

Xbox ONLY! Despite rumours earlier this year, *DOA* remains an exclusively Xbox series.

> Samurai slasher *Otogi* rips on to Xbox with a nod to *Shinobi*

launch control

hitting the target faster than a 'chute-free elephant



ON SALE > NOV 8
REVIEW > NEXT MONTH

UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

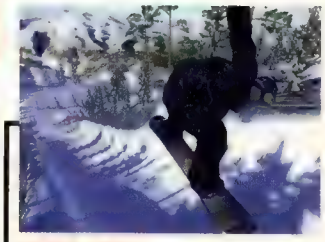
Flatmate used the last of the loo roll? Best mate refuse to pay their part of the phone bill? Like shooting strangers across the Internet? Then *Unreal Championship* might just be the wedge of multiplayer mayhem you've been waiting for. Set up a frag-fest and let loose those inner frustrations... they'll pay back all right—in blood.

ON SALE > NOV 22
REVIEW > NEXT MONTH

MEDAL OF HONOUR: FRONTLINE

Whether you're for or against the use of real conflicts as a background for games, you have to admire the sheer pedigree of the *Medal Of Honour* series. *Frontline* sees you become part of the Allied advance into German territory in an effort to steal an all-powerful super-weapon. As you do.

COMING SOON	PUBLISHER	GENRE	ON SALE	Worthy	Mediocre	Shun it!
Elder Scrolls III: Morrowind	Ubi Soft	Action-RPG	Oct 18			
NBA Inside Drive 2003	Microsoft	Sports	Oct 18			
NFL Fever 2003	Microsoft	Sports	Oct 18			
Tennis Master Series	Vivendi	Sports	Oct 18			
TimeSplitters 2	Eidos	First-person shooter	Oct 18			
Barbarian	Titus Software	Third-person action	Oct 25			
Eggo Mania	Kemco	Puzzler	Oct 25			
Need For Speed	EA	Driving	Oct 25			
Terminator: Dawn Of Fate	Infogrames	Third-person action	Oct 25			
Toe Jam & Earl III	Sega	Platformer	Oct			
FIFA 2003	EA	Football	Nov 1			
Sega GT 2002	Infogrames	Racing	Nov 1			
Unreal Championship	Infogrames	First-person shooter	Nov 1			
Vexx	Acclaim	Platformer	Nov 1			
Blinx: The Timesweeper	Microsoft	3D platformer	Nov 8			
Fellowship Of The Ring	Vivendi	Action-adventure	Nov 8			
House Of The Dead 3	Sega	First-person shooter	Nov 8			
Micro Machines	Infogrames	Racing	Nov 8			
Toxic Grind	THQ	BMX	Nov 8			
Transworld Snowboarding	Infogrames	Snowboarder	Nov 8			
Brute Force	Microsoft	Action	Nov 15			
Ghost Recon	Ubi Soft	Action	Nov 15			
Reign Of Fire	Bam!	Action	Nov 15			
Harry Potter	EA	Adventure	Nov 15			
Batman: Dark Tomorrow	Kemco	Third-person action	Nov 22			
MechAssault	Microsoft	Mech	Nov 22			
Medal Of Honour: Frontline	EA	First-person shooter	Nov 22			
Splinter Cell	Ubi Soft	Stealth-shooter	Nov 22			
Dave Mirra BMX XXX	Acclaim	BMX	Nov 29			
Dead To Rights	EA	Shooter	Nov 29			
James Bond 007: Nightfire	EA	First-person shooter	Nov 29			
Legends Of Wrestling 2	Acclaim	Beat-'em-up	Nov 29			
NBA Live 2003	EA	Sports	Nov 29			
Tony Hawk's 4	Activision	Skateboarding	Nov 29			



ON SALE > NOV 8
REVIEW > PAGE 56

TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

Do the names Tina Basich, Barrett Christy and Andrew Crawford mean anything to you? No, us neither, but what we do know is that they're pro-snowboarders featured in Infogrames' *Transworld Snowboarding*. The game promises all the fun of 'boarding, without the freezing cold, the annoying 'street' language ("dude!") and the overpriced, oversized clothing.

ON SALE > NOV 29
REVIEW > NEXT MONTH

TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 4

An all new career mode and improved bail graphics will draw you away from the time-based runs of old towards a far more exciting, free-roaming style of play. But will *Hawk's 4* prove different enough from its predecessors to warrant a wad of your hard-earned? Find out in **XGamer** 11.

XGAMER MOST WANTED

It's more than a year away, but *Halo 2* still tops the team's most wanted chart. In the near future, *Unreal Championship* has got us sizing each other up for a cathartic orgy of wanton bone-splintering violence.

1	HALO 2	Bungie/Microsoft — First-person shooter
2 (3) ↑	STEEL BATTALION	Capcom — Shoot-'em-up
3 (New entry) →	SPLINTER CELL	Ubi Soft — Stealth-'em-up
4 (New entry) →	UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP	Infogrames — First-person shooter
5 (New entry) →	TONY HAWK'S 4	Activision — Skateboarding

READER'S MOST WANTED

Which upcoming games are you most looking forward to? Cast your vote for the chance to scoop a top prize.

Name _____ Address _____

Postcode _____ Email _____

XBOX GAMES WISH LIST...

List your five most wanted Xbox games, then send them to the address below...

1 _____ 2 _____

3 _____ 4 _____

5 _____ If I win the Most Wanted prize, please send me the following free game _____

READERS, PLEASE RETURN THIS COUPON TO:
My Most Wanted, XGamer Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW **Or email** xgamer@fxmi.com

READERS' MOST WANTED

It seems you share our anticipation for the return of Master Chief, as well as *Fable (Project Ego)*. Next month we're expecting a Rare old shake-up with news of *Perfect Dark*. Meanwhile, Jamie Farquhar from Herts nets a game.

1 (1) —	HALO 2	Bungie/Microsoft — First-person shooter
2 (3) ↑	FABLE (PROJECT EGO)	Big Blue Box/Microsoft — RPG
2 (New Entry) →	BLINX: THE TIME SWEEPER	Microsoft — Platformer
4 (New Entry) →	PANZER DRAGOON ORTA	Smilebit/Sega — Shoot-'em-up
5 (New Entry) →	SPLINTER CELL	Ubi Soft — Stealth-'em-up

SEGA

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Hitmaker

XBOX

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6-PAGE PREVIEW SPECIAL!

TRAILER PARK TRASHED

HALO 2

Covenant forces have punched through Earth's perimeter defences. They're firebombing our very homeworld from orbit. Crack out the sandwich boards, people... the end of the world is nigh.

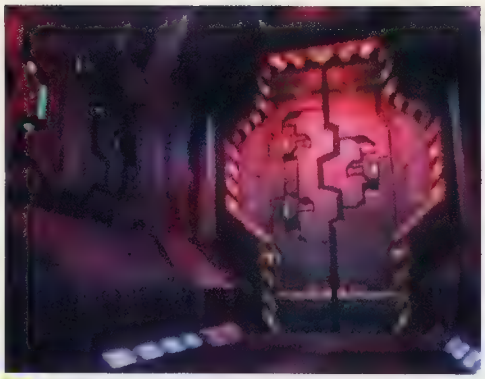
Dark days, indeed. After the 'temporary setback' of *Halo*, the massed ranks of The Covenant have redoubled their war efforts, and are single-mindedly pursuing their goal– namely, the total obliteration of mankind. As the recently-released trailer of *Halo 2* opens, they seem to be making a mighty fine job of it, too...

As we all know, *Halo* concluded with Master Chief jetting off into the ether to continue his Covenant-lamping galactic good works. Now his travels have brought him home to the Earth system and the beginning of the next epic instalment.

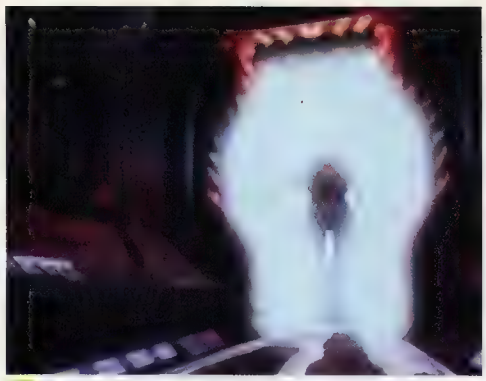
On arrival, he finds Covenant ships cruising in the plane of the ecliptic, pouring truckloads of tactical nukes onto our defenceless towns and cities. Never the spectator, he grasps the nettle and dives headlong into the fray. Literally.

The *Halo 2* trailer is perfect. Not only does it give you a glimpse of the adventure to come, but it puts a quivering lump in your throat *and* raises the hairs on the back of your neck... In short, it reminds you why you fell in love with *Halo* in the first place. But enough talk. It's time for action...

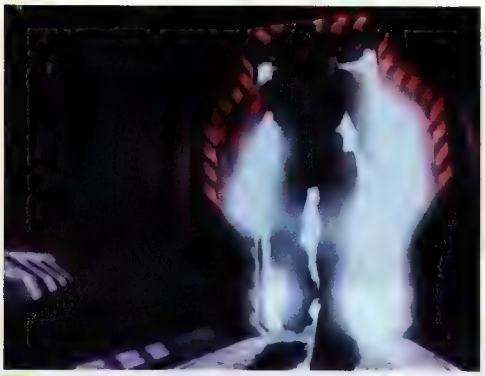
1 In a sci-fi cinematic style, the trailer opens with a monitor message, packed with potential. Quiet in the back, please. This is gonna be good...



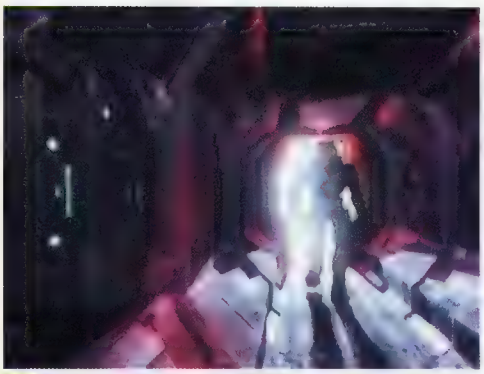
2 The ship's klaxon sounds and bulkheads are washed red with flashing warning beacons. Wassup? Someone left the gas on? Not quite.



3 The airlock slides open, and a familiar figure marches into view through the blazing corona. Permission to dribble, sir?



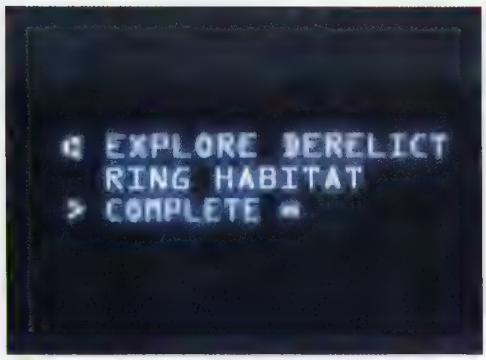
4 Our man emerges from the blaze of light. He's in a hurry, but his body movements, as you'd expect from Mr C, remain cool and controlled.



5 More atmospherics. As he strides briskly down the corridor, a bulkhead, sensing his approach, automatically slides to one side, revealing...

6 Ah, the gun-cupboard. As he approaches the bulkhead, Master Chief's presented with a tasty selection of Covenant-fragging rifles.

7 Without breaking stride, The Chief snags a thunder stick. Looks like a new type of assault rifle...



8 The monitor motif pops up again to remind us of a previous victory. Halo: cracked. But past success doesn't guarantee victory this time around.

9 The camera flicks back to the corridor for another moody mise-en-scène. At the far end, an impregnable door slowly begins to open...

PAUSE

HARDWARE NEW TOYS AND ALL

It seems humanity's finest has a new toy. This sleek-looking slugthrower looks to combine the killingness of the sniper and assault rifles, thereby increasing a soldier's tactical flexibility in the field. We're also promised a super rapid-firing marine weapon that spits caseless rounds by the thousand. Gimme! Gimme now!

Intriguingly, the Eric Nylund novel, *Halo: The Fall Of Reach* (**XGamer** 09 8/10) describes how The Covenant had no knowledge of nuclear weapons. But, later, in the *Halo 2* trailer, we see them clearly dropping nukes on Earth—looks like they've been copying our technology. Does this mean mankind's R&D Tefal-heads have been furiously reverse-engineering Covenant technology in an effort to crack the secrets of their plasma weapons? Let's hope so. Master Chief will need every edge he can get in the coming conflict...

PLAY

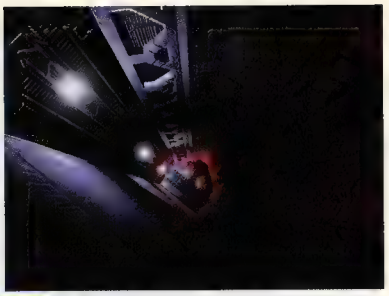
PAUSE

AI BEAUTIFUL MINDS

According to Bungie, Halo's Covenant and Marine AI concentrated on fighting and avoiding fire. In *Halo 2*, it's attempting to create more intelligent and adaptive brain-routines for non-player characters. Enemies will move through the environment in more intelligent ways, taking advantage of cover, and heading for areas where scenery and machinery can be manipulated. This means Covenant forces will adapt to their environments, and fight in different ways as the terrain changes. Bang on.

PLAY

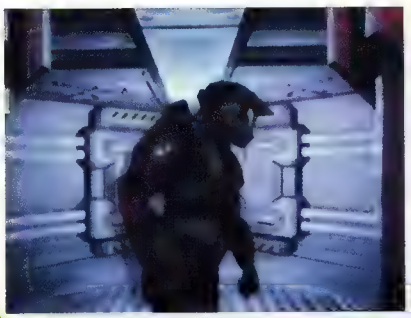
13 'Hostile Ground Forces'? That'll be the ENTIRE COVENANT ARMADA we wiped out in *Halo*.



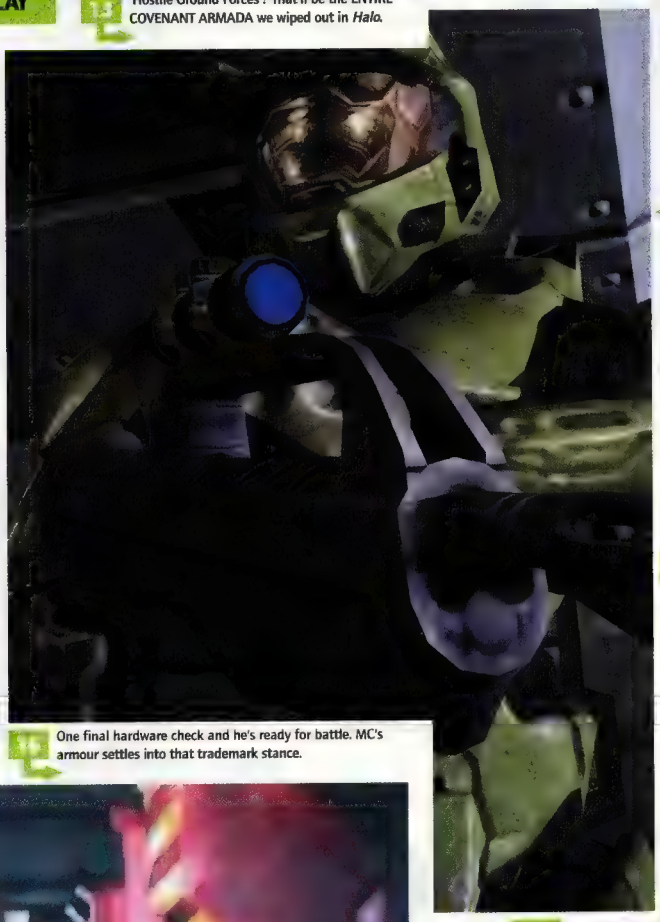
14 The lift powers down the shaft. The screen shakes with the industrial steel weight of its passage.

15 The Chief locks and loads as the lift descends, and we get a good long look at that souped up rifle. Nice scope.

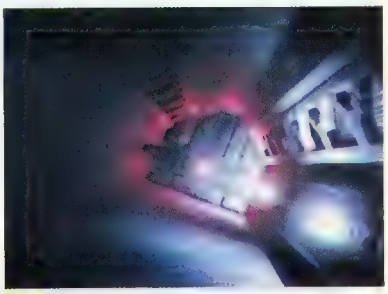
12 The doors close, obscuring our view. Master Chief stands as impassive as a rock. Wethinks he likes the attention.



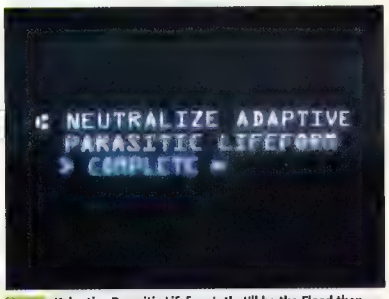
11 The Chief pauses in the lift. Yep, he's definitely looking tougher. New helm and everything. Very stylish.



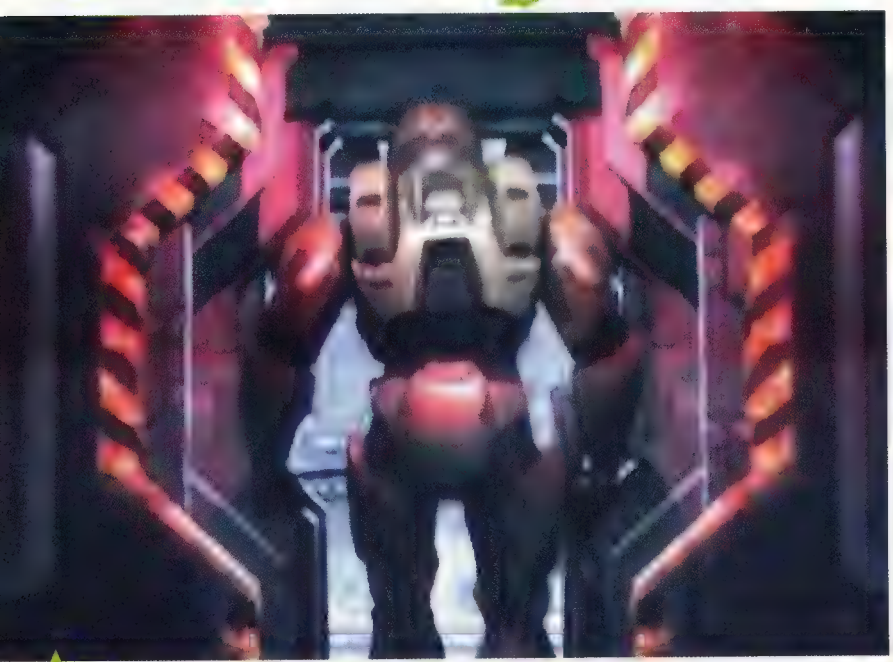
16 One final hardware check and he's ready for battle. MC's armour settles into that trademark stance.



17 The lift continues in its descent–but then begins to slow... Wonder where it's going to stop?



18 'Adaptive Parasitic Lifeform'–that'll be the Flood then. Took care of them. Job's a good 'un.

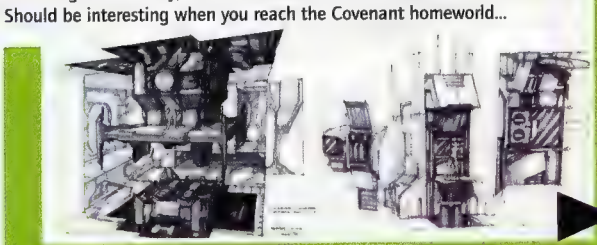


10 As the Chief walks down the corridor, we catch a glimpse of his back–does that armour look different? And if the back's different, doesn't that mean the rest of him could've had a makeover, too? More importantly, does it make his bum look big?

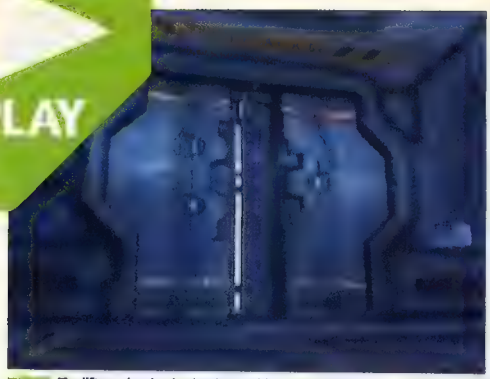
PAUSE

SCENERY WORLDS APART

Bungie is promising more gob-smacking scenery than ever before; to achieve this, it's even streamlining its models' polygon counts. But don't worry–it's optimising detail levels too, so beasties will look at least as good, if not better. Bungie's also ditching that repetition in level structure, so no more running through endless control rooms. It's working towards more 'organic' scenery, with which marines and Covenant can interact. Should be interesting when you reach the Covenant homeworld...

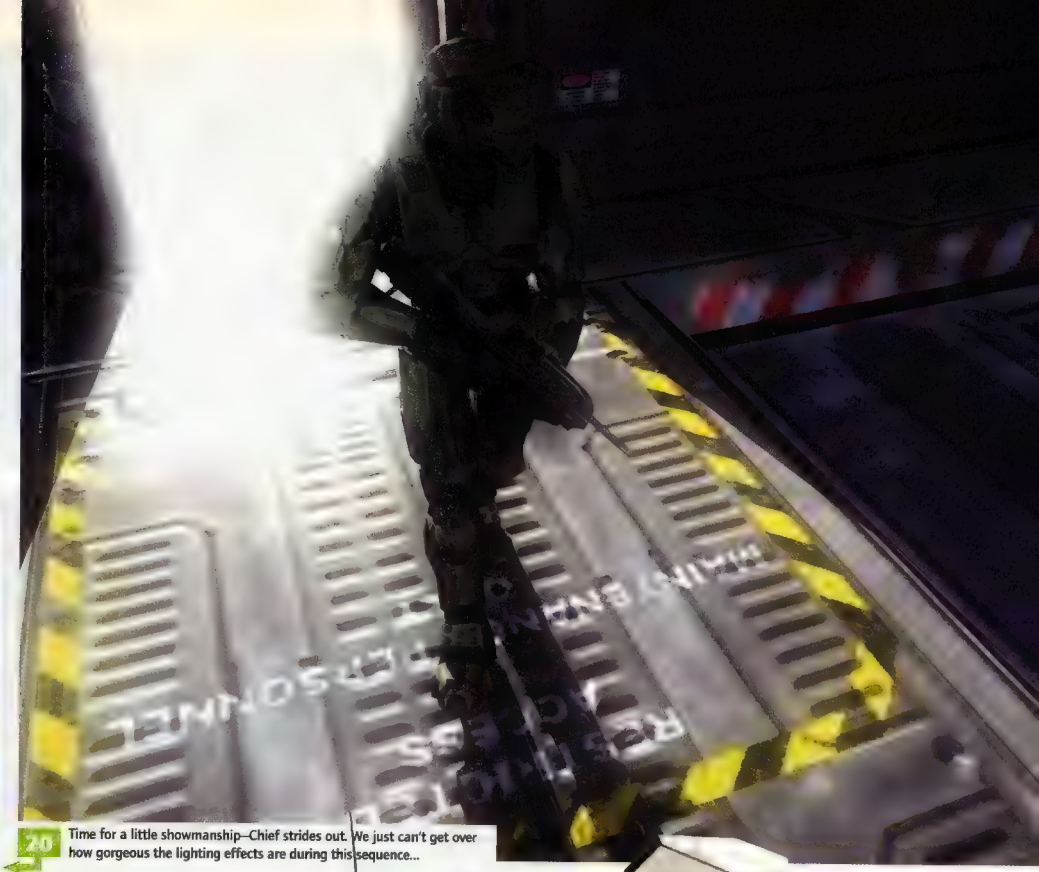


PLAY



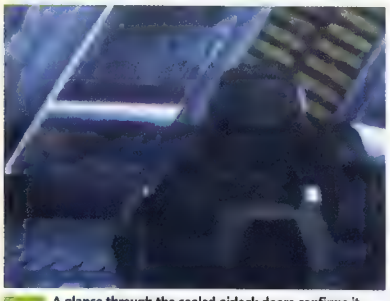
19 The lift reaches its destination. Inside, Master Chief is prepared for a new threat from the Covenant... The doors slide apart. Tension mounts.

21 Blimmin' 'eck! That 'Ancient AI Construct' must surely be nothing but a fancy moniker for Guilty Spark. The smug little robo-shite.



20 Time for a little showmanship—Chief strides out. We just can't get over how gorgeous the lighting effects are during this sequence...

22 Master Chief moves on, the terse chatter of beleaguered ground forces crackling loudly in his earphones.



23 A glance through the sealed airlock doors confirms it—we're orbiting Earth. Isn't she beautiful?

PAUSE

VEHICLES
HOT WHEELS

The selection of vehicles in *Halo* was grand. But that was just the beginning. Master Chief now has access to a range of wheeled and tracked marine vehicles, as well as a fine new selection of Covenant anti-grav war machines.

You can look forward to snow and jungle-variant warthogs to cope with adverse environments, plus a flatbed version that enables you to shuttle up to six marines into combat. We're also slavering to feel the Warthog ATV in action, but most hotly anticipated vehicle award must go to the Shadow, a Covenant flyer designed to transport four Covenant Elites. We want it, and we want it *now*.

PLAY

24 But what's this? Something else... Blossoms of nuclear light, blooming like bright flowers across the land... We're under nuclear attack!

25 And thus Master Chief receives his latest mission. But how can one man stop an orbital bombardment? With deft use of guile and gun, of course.

26 Ever the man of action, Master Chief swings to his left, and thumps a control panel... The time for posing is over. Prevarication, be gone.

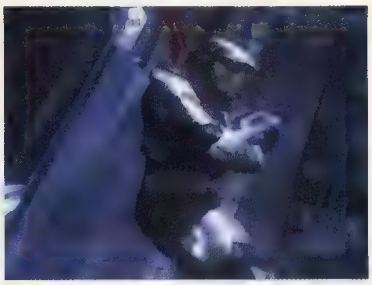
II PAUSE

PLAY

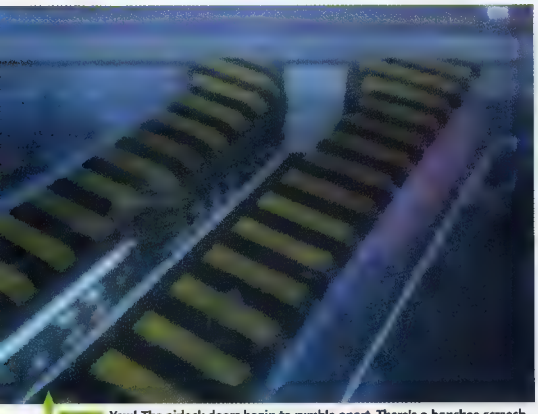
RACES
FOREIGN RELATIONS

We were all agog when we first discovered the Covenant caste system, weren't we? Now imagine travelling to the Covenant homeworld and seeing the different species in their own environment. *Halo 2* will take you deeper into Covenant culture; in fact, the name is borne of the long-standing pact between the Elites, who form the military arm of society, and the Prophets—The Covenant's spiritual and political leadership caste. But there's a third race lurking in the wings too. Of the feral Brutes, we know next to nothing...

30 Is this wise? Master Chief avoids the howling winds by standing with his back to a stanchion.



31 With not a shred of concern for personal safety, Master Chief dives into the maelstrom.



29 Yow! The airlock doors begin to rumble apart. There's a banshee screech of air as the bay decompresses... You can almost *feel* the vacuum.

32 *Sherrrrrlllluuuup!* In mere moments, he's sucked out into the hostile vacuum of space, like a cork from a champagne bottle.

28 Cortana pipes up: "What if you miss?" "I won't," replies The Chief, and yanks the handle with stoic indifference. What's he planning?

27 The panel whooshes out of sight to reveal a sturdy-looking handle. The Chief grips it. Clearly, this isn't the fuse box under the stairs...

II PAUSE

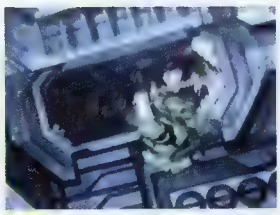
STORYLINE
HOME AND AWAY

We almost don't want to give it away. But, hey, you've probably picked up juicy niblets of it scattered throughout this feature anyway, so what the hell...

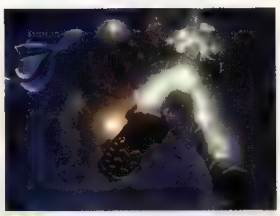
Master Chief returns to Earth to find a full-on invasion in progress. The Covenant have busted through our outer defences, and are pounding away with orbital bombardments. The Chief performs a one-man assault on one of their assault cruisers, the outcome of which is, at this stage, uncertain.

What we do know is that, in response, Cortana and The Chief manage to work their way deep into Covenant space, and reach the societies' homeworld, where they confront several hitherto unseen species. We'll also discover The Covenant's true motivations for attacking mankind.

PLAY

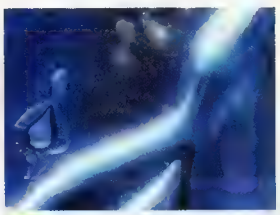


33 The camera switches to an outside view, whereupon we see The Chief hurtling downwards in freefall.



34 Surely this is suicide? The Chief's suit can protect him from hard vacuum, sure, but re-entry might get toasty...

35 But what's this? The Chief isn't aiming for Earth. As we see him plummet down, something hoves into view...



36 Jeezus! He's headed for a Covenant Assault Cruiser. What next? Only Bungie knows. Go on home, folks. Show's over.

STOP

THE FINAL WORD

It all begins here. We know the rough plot, where the game is going, and a few of the technical innovations that those Bungie-peeps are working into the sequel to The Best Game Ever. Bar any serious hitches, *Halo 2* is scheduled to hit the streets Christmas 2003. And you know what? It's going to be a long damn year.

Party at My Place...

ARGONAUT GAMES PLC

SIERRA

Malice.sierra.com

PlayStation.2

XBOX

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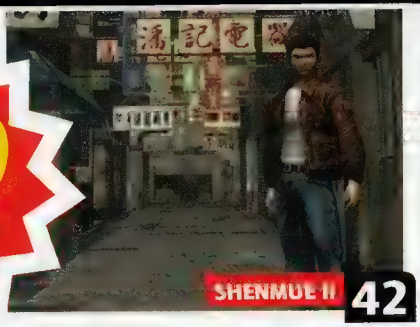
hands on

XGAMER we've played into the future



select

34 **UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP**
The flame-grilled multiplayer phenomenon comes home to roast. Want fries with that? You've no choice...

36 **REIGN OF FIRE**
It's man versus lizard in desperate battle. Let's hope it doesn't drag-on. Cough.

38 **MEDAL OF HONOUR FRONTLINE**
Win WW2 single-handedly. As an American. Because that's what really happened, isn't it? Yeeeees.

40 **BIG MUTHA TRUCKERS**
Eat chips, pick up hitch hikers and overtake other trucks in the middle lane, clogging up the ENTIRE motorway. If only.

42 **SHENMUE II**
Join us as we explore the misty back streets and pongy fish markets of Hong Kong.

44 **TOTAL IMMERSION RACING**
High-tail it to route 44 right now, and drown yourself in its goodness.

46 **LORD OF THE RINGS: FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING**
Shave your feet, little hobbit. Today we go on a wonderful adventure.

HOW GAMES MAGS WORK...

ALPHA CODE
The earliest game code publishers will show. Major features missing; provides a sketchy indication of gameplay.

BETA CODE
First real sight of full game. Still undergoing bug-testing, but the majority of missions and graphics are complete.

PRE-SUBMISSION
Virtually finished, code is ready for submission to Microsoft quality control with a view to confirming production.

first contact
The first look at an exciting title, that our superior games antennae have detected at a very early stage in the development process.

hands on
This is when we expect to play the game for the first time and report our initial findings to you. A good early indication of how it's shaping up.

reviews
The acid test. The final code is now ready for us to rip apart, leaving no sprite unturned during our merciless testing. We do it for you.

HANDS ON PREDICTIONS

Uppers/Downers We're not going to arse around and write vague, ill-informed previews that raise false hopes about a game's potential. We'll rank its good and bad points right here

Forecast A rough guide to the prospects of the game based on its early form. Bear in mind this is not a final judgement. A lot can change between preview stage and review.

XGAMER PREDICTS

- **PAL Convulsion** Prepare to be repelled by borders unless Capcom breaks habit of poor PAL conversions.
- **Resident experts** Aren't we all tired of this by now?
- **Zombies** It's hard to go wrong with our pulmonarily-challenged chums.
- **Action** No auto lock-on here, you'll need to be good at games.
- **Medieval Japan** Because, 400 years and counting, ninja are *still* cool.
- **Capcom** It's made by one of our favourite Japanese developers

Onimusha wouldn't look revolutionary if you stuck a beret and a cigar on it, but you can't beat a good solid adventure. **HIT!**

*Genma Onimusha*_Review next issue

GREEN IS GO!
This game's looking good. You can start getting excited... NOW.

CAUTION
Hmmm. This one could go either way. Don't rush in.

RED ALERT
Ouch. An unfolding tragedy– unlikely they'll save it in time.

DO NOT MISS...
THE MAKING OF FABLE *Project Ego* undergoes a name change on page 125

RIDE INTO HELL AND BACK

Your mission to obliterate all and sundry sees you gushing entrails over a wide range of futuristic landscapes.

The corridors of this hellish castle are licked by life-sapping flames. Time to turn up the heat—these guys haven't messed with us before...

Xbox LIVE!

Unreal Championship is the flagship Xbox Live title, featuring tons of insane multiplayer action for up to 16 players per game.

LIGHTNING NEVER STRIKES NICE

The latest addition to the *Unreal* arsenal is the aptly named lightning gun. It replaces the sniper rifle, enabling you to hide and snipe from afar with the help of a killer zoom mode.

1 A lightning crossfire proves an utterly devastating attack.

2 Overkill can leave you a little vulnerable to snipers.

3 Even in close combat, lightning usually wins the day.

4 This bit isn't fatal, but the blood is flowing fast.

Time to cool down—during an Arctic mission. A little team talk's all that's required before you round the corner into the valley of death.

hands on

unreal championship

Head shots can be damn messy. Just ask any porn star...

release 15 november complete

game

- **Genre** First-person shooter
- **Players** 1-16
- **Movies** xbox.ign.com/articles/136/136292p1.html
- **Code stage** Beta

company

- **Developer** Digital Extremes
- **Publisher** Infogrames
- **Contact** 0161 827 8065 www.unrealchampionship.com

***Sensible Soccer, GoldenEye, Halo*—all games that suck on the very fabric of time, reeling you in and only spitting you out when starvation beckons in the early hours of the morning.** Games so moreish they haunt you in your sleep, on the bus and halfway into a romantic dinner. And, judging by this awesome preview version of *Unreal Championship*, historians will soon be adding another first-person masterpiece to their list of greats. Read on and weep.

Despite a predominantly PC heritage, *Unreal* is based on instinctive controls, quick-fire action and unfettered annihilation of multiple opponents. When you're trigger finger gets tickly, it's the ideal antidote to dull-as-muck tactical games.

Delivering by far its biggest thrill, however, are the game's devastating weapons. Gut-busting nail guns, face-frying lasers and leg-shattering grenades turn the 30 levels into minefields of death and destruction—by

WHOLE NEW BALL GAME

In the Bombing Run multiplayer mode, you'll be legging it to pass a ball through a goal for victory, barrels blazing.

1 [illegible] goal (literally). But where the bloody ell's the ball? Time to find the enemy...

2 Great start, but poor old Pelosin (may he rest in pieces) wasn't even in possession. Keep looking...

3 Get in! Arclite's got it. Now lay down [illegible] fire so he can make vital headway.

SCREEN-SPLITTERS

As well as the raft of online gaming possibilities, *Unreal Championship* gives you the opportunity to battle up to four mates in a traditional split-screen mode. Pity that screen-watchers will spy on your location...

MORE BANG PER BUCK

'Game physics' and 'AI tweaking' might be the sort of terms that make you snore, but the incredible technical achievements on display in *Unreal Championship* will have you babbling incoherently into your Voice Communicator.

[illegible] knocking them off guard so you can move in for the kill. Goodbye, fellas...

instant expert in 3 easy steps

[illegible]

BLOW TO PERDITION

Attacks at close quarters can be particularly satisfying, with plenty of flying viscera to savour. Mind you don't get blood on your Voice Communicator, though.

After 3,556 consecutive fraggings, a weary Tom Hanks [illegible] chosen a less obvious Gamertag. Serves him right, we say.

unreal championship

the time you've won the day, you'll have off-loaded more rounds than the British army during World War II.

five go a-hunting

Unreal is structured around five main match modes: Deathmatch (a straight battle—the first to reach a designated number of kills wins); Survival (a simple last-man-standing face-off); Capture The Flag (nick your enemy's standard and return it to your base); Bombing Run (a future sports game in which you frag enemies to nab a ball and run for victory)—and, finally, Double Domination (win rounds by taking control of your own and an enemy's base for ten seconds).

In other words, it's not always about attacking play. As well as hunting down enemies and eliminating them with glee, you also have to protect your colleagues and hang back to defend your own positions. If the solitary option is more your thing, you can even play solo, blattering AI bots who play with increasingly terrifying vigour. We're also promised vehicles in the final version, but there's no sign of them yet.

Already in place is a high-paced, high-action game, that really comes to life with voice communication. Despite a one-second delay, taunting adds a thrilling edge of rivalry to proceedings.

A solid gold winner in the making... **Lee Hall**

GAMER PREDICTS

- **Carnage** Outrageously compelling multiplayer gaming.
- **Instant** Dead simple to pick up and play.
- **Kill** So many ingenious weapons, with fiendish secondary functions that you may never tire of fragging
- **Clever** Technically, pure class, with great physics, AI and no slow-down.
- **Yawn!** We can't play the damn thing in its finest form until next March when Xbox Live launches. Dammit.

Shaping up to be the finest multiplayer game on Xbox, and that includes *Halo* and *TimeSplitters*. Refuse to miss next issue's review. HIT!

reign of fire

Relive those fantasies—no, not *those* fantasies; the ones about the dragons.

release 15 november complete

Come on, admit it. When you were knee-high to a cocktail stick, you often daydreamed of slaying whopping great dragons. We all did. Preparing for action as you handled the hot pipe, ready to blast away like no one's business, slipping into a state of being where nothing matters more than sustaining the heat in front of you. Enter: *Reign Of Fire*, a dragon-blasting adventure set to quosh your thirst for scaley violence.

ROF is a shooter set in 2024, and it's based on the film of the same name. As a member of a plucky gang of human resistance fighters, you're trying to blast a dominant race of hot-blooded lizards out of the skies using a hangar-load of resources, such as tanks and a truck mounted with a gatling gun. They're just the sort of tools you need when up against flying whales with flame-thrower gobs. But in *Reign Of Fire*, hostility comes from land as well as air. The hills are awash with 'Raptor like beasts and the skies are constantly bombarding you with fire and dragon turd.

hot tongue action

If you prefer man-mulching and woman-toasting, though, you'll be chuffed to learn that the game also enables you to take up the dragons' cause. Starting off as a young pup, poorly tooled up with a box of Swan Vesta and a can of flammable Lynx, you physically develop from level to level, learning ever more devious ways of napalming the poor human fritters who fall foul of your fiery breath. But be careful; those humans get to fire back. Much flanking and diving is required if you want to see adulthood.

It all sounds bloody lovely on paper. The trouble is, the early code we pawed makes the game, well, a bit old. Visually, *Reign Of Fire* looks like it's running on a 486 PC from the mid '90s. The texturing's blander than tap water and the 3D engine looks like it's been coded by a super-programmer trying to get 3D from a Mega Drive. Also, the animation's a complete misery, with the lizards running around the hills in such a shoddy fashion you can't help but wonder if anyone's actually been employed to animate them.

There's a good reason why this hasn't got an alarm—yet. The code has a rough, unfinished feel to it, and lots can (and surely must) be done to bring it up to today's standards. Keep checking the reviews section. We'll let you know if the end product reaches the skies or simply goes up in flames. **Danny Curley**

GAMER PREDICTS

Very hard to say. It's a good concept—and it could be ace, given a little work—but if it remains so shoddy, it'll die a fiery death.

KORMA!

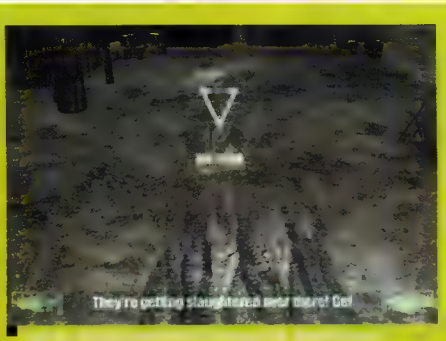
WHO'S THE PUFF DADDY?

1

2

3

xtra: what if...



THE ART OF AN ASSASSIN

THE SPEARED LEG
Blood type "A" on wooden floor.
Specialist equipment: Crossbow
Produced in China 2002.

Donated by: Masahiro Halamoto

PC CD-ROM PlayStation 2 XBOX

HITMAN 2
SILENT ASSASSIN

IO Interactive

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medal of honour frontline

Prepare your gore lust for another rack of Hun-shooting, blood-buttered toast.

release **22 november** complete

Fancy popping a cap in a Nazi's head while he's having a cig break, unaware of your hostile intent? Of course you do, which is why *Medal Of Honour* ought to be such kraut-crushin' fun. To all intents and purposes, it's *Saving Private Ryan* (sans licence), right down to its gory opening Omaha Beach level. From then on in, it's a lengthy first-person shooting campaign to Hitler's front door, taking in all the great battles (including the ill-fated Operation Market Garden) and cross-country scenery.

Missions are structured into a series of objectives; complete one and you move on to the next. For example, one section has you crawling from a crate smuggled onto a submarine. It's then a case of completing a list of missions, like blowing up torpedoes and finding a book containing Enigma Code tables before jumping ship to freedom. So far, so by-the-numbers mission-led gunnery.

Fortunately, EA has gone to great lengths to recreate the feel of real conflict using ultra-realistic sound effects. You can sense the bullets whizzing past your head, almost 'feel' the pavements being smashed to rubble as waves of aircraft blitz the landscape... Gameplay-wise, however, things are a little less exemplary—slow reloads and dubious accuracy mean combat's about as sharp as soggy rice pudding.

The PS2 button icons on the menus (clearly yet to be erased) are an early warning that this is a direct port. Considering the slow frame-rate and ugly texturing, that's a bit of a war crime in itself. *Medal Of Honour: Frontline* should be suckling proudly on the Xbox's plump power-teats.

Sadly, this—and the fact Xbox already boasts two ace FPS games (*Halo* and *TimeSplitters 2*)—suggests it'll take more than a few months' army training before *Frontline* is fit for release. Pity, really. **Danny Curley**

XGAMER PREDICTS

As a straight PS2 conversion, it'll pale into insignificance next to *Halo*, *TimeSplitters 2* and the forthcoming *Unreal Championship*. CAUTION

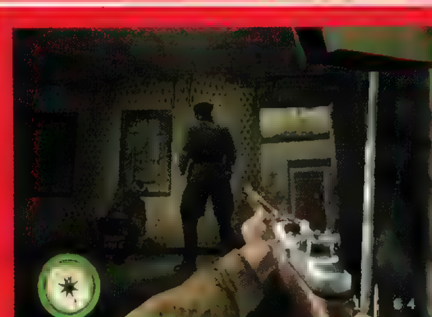
BEACH BUMS

The horrific Omaha Beach invasion opens the game...

1

2

3



HITMAN 2
SILENT ASSASSIN

IO Interactive

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THE BUCK STARTS HERE

1 2 3 4

RAT RACE

status: exposed

hands on

big mutha truckers

A racing-come-trading game that's more than just a truckin'-great pun.

release **december** complete

Never underestimate the power of movies. As impressionable youths, what we witnessed on the silver screen would invoke all kinds of far-flung career paths—come on, who didn't fancy a stab at archaeology after *Raiders Of The Lost Ark*? But only one film actually made long-distance lorry driving seem appealing—the anarchic rig-a-thon that was *Convoy*.

While that film hyped up the carefree abandon of life on the open freeway, it failed to mention the unglamorous downside of spending every waking hour shifting shite from one end of the country to the other—like the intolerable bum sores and the not-so-cool T-shirt tan lines. Such a reality check comes courtesy of the comically handled *Big Mutha Truckers*.

trucking like rabbits

Set in Hick State County in the USA's Deep South, this quirky racer revolves around the 'Big Mutha Truckers

WATCH THE GODDAMN ROAD!

Like any racing game worth its skidmarks, *Big Mutha Truckers* features multiple driving views and a rather neat rear-view mirror effect. Note subtle fiery decals to impress the barmaids...

1 View your rig from afar and wince as you narrowly avoid spilling your load all over the road. Filthy boy.

2

3

KNOCKIN' ON BIG MAMMA'S DOOR

The hump-backed head of the family business is stepping down and it's up to you to decide who takes her place. But would you seriously entrust your thriving enterprise to this bunch of hicks?

for getting things done—which is why he has offspring in every town!

Bobbie-Sue Jackson: She may be "purdier than a pig in a pitcher", but she's also inherited Ma's hard-as-nails approach to business.

Earl Jackson: A lazy, self-righteous slob who likes to watch women "gettin' nekkid for money". I'm sure the feeling is mutual.

Cletus Jackson: Thick as pig excrement, but short of enthusiasm. Point him in the right direction and he'll get there. Fast.

instant expert in 3 easy steps

How to be a low-down and dirty Mutha Trucker...

- **Sibling rivalry** It's every Mutha Trucker for themselves, so get ready to gazump, cheat and run your relatives off the road!
- **Buy low, sell high** Making moola is of paramount importance, so blow those cobwebs out of your ears and get your business head on.
- **Rig-up** Remember to keep some spare cash for new trailers—you can't haul frozen fish in any old crate, y'know.

big mutha truckers

Haulage Company'—so-called because the proprietor is one Ma Jackson, a hairy-gummed beast of a lady. But now she's retiring, she's throwing down the gauntlet to her four dosey, banjo-strumming kin to prove their worth as a prospective heir to the business. All they have to do is buy, sell and haul various cargos around the county and whoever amasses the most moola after 60 days gets to be the main Mutha Trucker. So, after choosing a suitable sibling, it's off into the great wide yonder in your humming haulage truck to make a fast, not so honest, buck.

What follows is a jaunt from town to town, picking up goods at a cost and then selling them on in neighbouring towns for a profit. Your earnings can then be blown on modifying your rig to better cope with the redneck rat race you're thrust into.

Aside from the main 'BMT' mode, which is played out in full over the 60 virtual days, there are mini-missions to embark upon and a soundtrack to really aggravate the boils beneath your greasy, mulleted trucker's hairline as you headbang incessantly.

It's hard to fathom exactly how captivating the wheeling and dealing theme will be in the long-term, though, as the early code we played was more unstable than Tara Palmer-Hewlett-Packard, but at least we know we're in for a trucking-great ride. **Ryan Butt**

GAMER PREDICTS

- **Soul trading** Sell your own sister for an extra dime because, when it comes to business, family don't mean diddly-squat.
- **Radio ga-ga** Tune your in-cab radio to all kinds of side-splitting spoof stations. Some even play Motörhead and Black Sabbath!
- **Jack-knives** Cackle insanely and watch the tailbacks that only an 18-wheeler careering out of control can create.
- **Chugging** Trucks aren't fast, so don't look for adrenaline kicks...

After exploring every other racing permutation, Eutechnyx's ambitious handbrake turn into *GTA3* territory is already lookin' mighty sweet. GO!

Big Mutha Truckers_**Review in the Christmas issue.**

IMPORT-ANT INFO

The Dreamcast incarnation of *Shenmue II* was never officially released in America, so they're naturally quite excited about the Xbox version. Neither Microsoft or Sega will definitely confirm a European release for *Shenmue II* on Xbox, though it seems likely they'll get round to it sooner or later. Incidentally, the US release is also being shipped with *Shenmue: The Movie*, a 90-minute prelude to the events in *Shenmue II*, using footage from the original Dreamcast version, pressed to DVD. The [illegible]

PUT YOUR HANDS TOGETHER FOR...

...the new cast members of *Shenmue II*. But even when people want to help, it's wise to be wary.

Street gang leader and duplicitous gambler Wuying Yen and the meek but hardly mild Joy—just two of the new folk Ryo gets to interact with.

EXTRA

Gameplay in the original *Shenmue* could be a little slow, Sega readily admit, so the new version boasts more action and mini-games.

EASTERN PROMISES

Now in Hong Kong, your pert-buttocked hero will soon notice changes made to his revamped environment, not least more complex locations, faster gameplay—and lashings of young *laaaaydies*...

1 [illegible] forward to more fights...

2 More chicks! From Joy to Ling Shia Hua to Hung San Jing...

3 Bigger! Free roam areas 'round' to explore and interact with.

4 Flashbacks! These help draw you further into the story.

Eager to avenge pop's death, Ryo will [illegible] hands. Or rather hand. Here, a reprobate pushes our man too far...

hands on

shenmue II

Xbox's emulating powers know no bounds. Here comes its Dreamcast impersonation.

release tbc complete

When it debuted on Dreamcast in 2001, *Shenmue* startled gamers with its intricately executed virtual world of people, pagodas and pilferers, set against a quasi-movie storyline of revenge, secret letters, mirrors and kung-fu villainy, gorgeously decked in sumptuous 3D. So news of the imminent sequel, again superminded by über-designer Yu Suzuki, will much please admirers of the original. Right at the start, hero Ryo Hazuki is on the tail of dad-killer Mr Di, setting foot in Aberdeen Harbour, Hong Kong only to be jumped on by hoodlums and deprived of his hard-won Phoenix Mirror. The plot thickens...

Shenmue II plays to its predecessor's greatest strengths: that immersive, life-like world of fish markets, junks and street vendors, but this time there are many more sub-games, including street gambling, arm-wrestling, hoodlum-battering (the latter now features some 50 punches, kicks and combos) and full-on 'reflex' challenges in the style of *Dragon's Lair*... Iffy controls and a clumsy Jap-to-Angle translation notwithstanding, this is shaping up pretty well. **Marc Saltzman**

GAMER PREDICTS

Feel too isolated in *Myst III: Exile*? Then this could be the perfect stocking filler. But will it be different enough to draw a non-*Shenmue* crowd?

HIT!

game

- **Genre** Adventure/action
- **Players** 1
- **Movies** www.xbox.com/shenmue2
- **Code stage** Beta

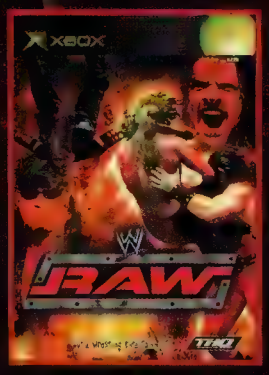
company

- **Developer** Sega-AM2
- **Publisher** Microsoft
- **Contact** 0870 601 0100 www.microsoft.com/uk/games/shenmue

TIME TO PLAY THE GAME

Time to get RAW® with the top WWE™ Superstars as you've never seen them before. Awesome reality comes crashing down around you with more thrills and more spills in true WWE™ style. Watch the audience scatter as you make your move any way you want, wherever you want with WWE™ RAW®'s unique and strategic fighting system.

This is RAW® - will you be?



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total immersion racing

It's certainly total something; we're not exactly sure what yet, though....

release november complete

Just try an experiment next time you play multiplayer *Halo*. Single someone out, throw a few "Yo', mama..." insults, and, if the theory is correct, they should shun easy kills to hunt down your ass. This is something that's missing from single player games. Opposing footballers simply ignore that two-footed challenge only Roy Keane would have considered fair. Bots happily suffer multiple fraggings. Even rival drivers have taken yet another face full of gravel, without whining... until now, that is.

This new preview version of *Total Immersion Racing* gifts your opponents with 'AI-tude' (their word, not ours). If you use the underhand tactic of repeatedly shunting them off the assorted real and fictitious F1 tracks, they become increasingly miffed. Fail to amend your evil ways and they get positively irate, deliberately singling you out for a taste of your own medicine by nosing you into the scenery. At least, that's the theory.

Luckily, floating exclamation marks above each of the 18 licensed cars shows how annoyed the driver is. The bigger and redder the symbol, the bigger and redder the face of the driver inside. But regardless of how filthy your driving is, the AI cars aren't inspired to *Crash* levels of wanton destruction. Nastiness extends to bitchy paint scratching, or, as the difficulty increases, being coerced gently into a dust-bath. It's a good idea, because it forces you to look at your driving style and account for your sins.

Also included is a confidence level for each of the other drivers. The higher the confidence, the more cocky they get, and the more likely they are to make a mistake. Even though it doesn't seem to play a huge part in the game, there is a smug satisfaction gained from passing an over-confident, erring driver.

Sadly, *TIR* still feels like a game that requires polishing, and the clock is ticking... **Barry Hale**

GAMER PREDICTS

The other drivers still seem a bit wimpy—where's the aggression? Fetch the Brasso and the dusters, people, this is going to need a bit of a polish.

CAUTION

game

company

TESTED TO FRUSTRATION...

In order to test Razorworks' 'AI-tude', we picked out this poor blighter and subjected him to the racing experiment of an M5 traffic jam. This is what happened...

1 [illegible]

2 [illegible]

3 [illegible]

xtra: what if...

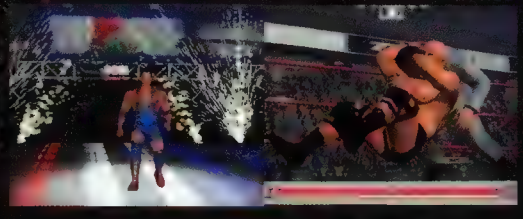
...we could tick off an opponent so much, they send someone around to break your legs, forcing you to miss down an important [illegible]

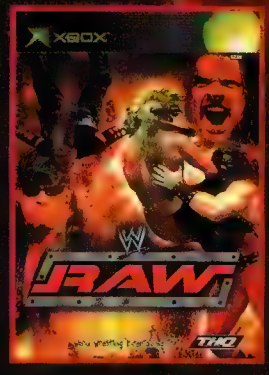
[illegible]

[illegible]

TIME TO PLAY THE GAME

Time to get RAW® with the top WWE™ Superstars as you've never seen them before. Awesome reality comes crashing down around you with more thrills and more spills in true WWE™ style. Watch the audience scatter as you make your move any way you want wherever you want with WWE™ RAW®'s unique and strategic fighting system.
This is RAW® - will you be?





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TOLKIEN THE PITH

Ah, *The Fellowship Of The Ring*. Who can forget that unforgettable bit at the beginning. Oh, you know, when that wizard-bloke Gondorf visits Freedoo the dwarf and they chat about a magic hammer? Something like that, anyway.

1 hell if I told anyone about it!"

2 beards, rubbish at limericks...

3 one little Hobbit and his ring.

4

5

HOBBIT-FORMING

Poor little Frodo. He's so little and wee, but he ends up face to face with all sorts of rotten monsters. Like this...

"I'm all Wight!" "Yikes! It's Michael Barrymore!" "No, I'm a *Wight!*" "Thank heavens for that." Cue hidden titters.

status: genius

Just like the book and the movie and commemorative tea cosy, you can pop the One Ring on Frodo's finger so he can turn invisible. Woo!

hands on

lord of the rings:

the fellowship of the ring

The game of the book from which they made a film, but not the game of the film. See?

release **november** complete

This whole licensing business; it's just plain daft, no? There are six *Lord Of The Rings* games lined up for a November release, all of them official. Two of them are based on *The Two Towers*—not the book, the film—and they're coming from EA. Four are based on *The Fellowship Of The Ring*—not the film, the book—and they're coming from Vivendi. And this is one of them. And obviously it has nothing to do with the film, except for the story. And that some of the characters and locations look just like their celluloid counterparts. Other than that, nothing to do with the film.

It's a third-person action adventure, and while you do the whole Fellowship thing, the only characters you get to play are Frodo, Aragorn and Gandalf, with sections to suit each character. Frodo does the running, jumping, sneaking thing; Gandalf waves his staff around and does magic; while Aragorn's your man for

'GORN BLIMEY

It's not all hobbitty Hobbits and wizardly wizards. For a bit of combat action, you can play as a proper human, Aragorn, whose name sounds a bit like that of an old French lecturer of mine.

1 seems a bit handy with a sword.

2 pointy-headed Middle Earth freak tastes my metal.

3 But, er, nothing too troublesome. Honest..

4 up and take it in turns, or something!

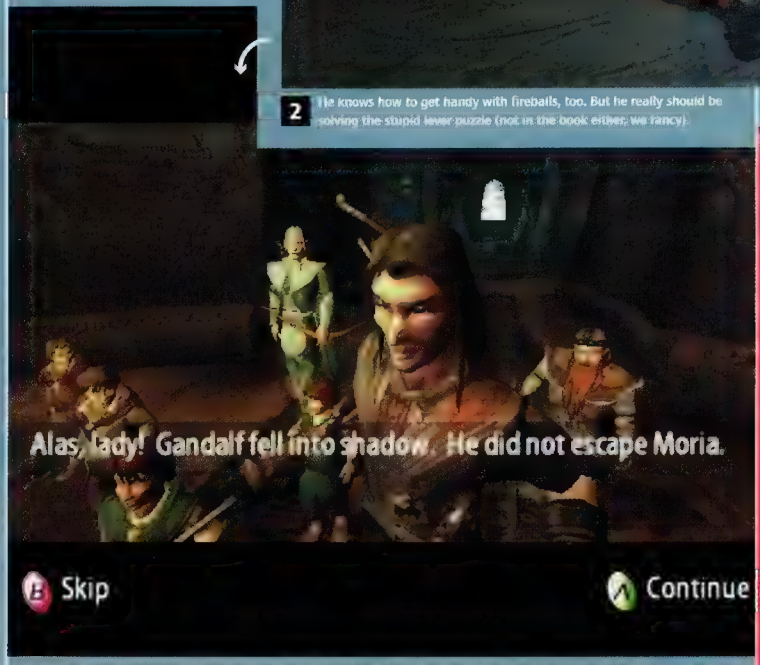
5

WIZARD WHEEZE

All right, hands up who wants to be Gandalf the Grey? We thought as much. Your wish is our command.

1 Now there's a man who knows what he's talking about.

2 He knows how to get handy with fireballs, too. But he really should be solving the stupid lever puzzle (not in the book either, we fancy).



3 To take matters into his own hands at Lothlorien while the little people look on helplessly. Yet again.

instant expert in 3 easy steps

Three characters to choose from. Here's how to rule with them all.

Frodo The little hobbit's not great for combat, but his special ring enables him to go all invisible. Useful stuff, until you overdo it and drop dead.

Gandalf Loads of magic to choose from, but the grey one can also wield a sword; handy for close-up fights.

Aragorn He's your main fighting man, make the most of his bow to weaken enemies at range, and then wade in with the sword to finish 'em off.

lord of the rings: the fellowship of the ring

some proper fighting action. In the version we've been playing, however, he seems to be more the man for getting surrounded by Orcs and managing to off a couple of them before being chopped to bits.

get in the ring

Worryingly, there are a few such issues in this version. Some of them feel like bugs that we expect to be squashed before the game's out, some of them are control and gameplay issues that may linger when this one hits the shelves, and some of them are presentational things that we just *know* you'll have to put up with. Hey ho.

So don't go expecting virtuoso voice performances, because unless they re-record the entire soundtrack between now and release, you ain't getting them. And while it's looking gorgeous (although the Hobbits look like the chubby-cheeked efforts from the cartoon version), there's the occasional bit of weirdness that'll really annoy you, such as not being able to wade into a river, and instead running into an invisible wall.

Not the most engrossing title we've ever played, in parts. It frequently descends into irritating 'run around and solve facile puzzles' mode—but when you have a story as enduring as Tolkien's opus, it's hard to go too wrong. We hope. **Jim McCauley**

GAMER PREDICTS

- **Looks** This is *The Lord Of The Rings* from the grass roots up. All the locations, all the people and all the, erm... grass.
- **Variety** Three characters to play; three different gaming styles.
- **Action** Everyone gets to have a scrap. Even little Frodo.
- **Yarn** Look, it's *The Lord Of The Rings!*
- **Umm...** Nope. We're not convinced. Don't even think of buying it before we review it next month.

Looking good, despite the lack of the film licence. But will it play cohesively? And will you be distracted by the inevitable bad voice acting? CAUTION

*The Fellowship Of The Ring*_**Review next month**

reviews

WARNING! CASH FLOW DANGER AHEAD

Take evasive action. Never buy a game until you've read **XGamer**'s tat-slapping reviews.

select

50 **SEGA GT 2002**
The best racer to razz its way onto Xbox? Find out here.

56 **TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING**
A third outing lets you bask in yet more white powder glory.

58 **MYST III: EXILE**
Old adventuring that'll either tickle your fancy—or have you burping in disgust.

60 **DEAD TO RIGHTS**
Max Payne style shooter involving an angry copper.

64 **LMA MANAGER 2003**
Don the trenchcoat and scream blue murder at your crap players.

66 **ELDER SCROLLS: MORROWIND**
Another dollop of Xbox RPGing. Yep, there does seem to be a lot of 'em around these days...

68 **COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3**
The best mud-caked fun you can have without naked ladies.

76 **ROCKY**
Take to the ring and crack a load of non-believers into the canvas.

84 **FIFA FOOTBALL 2003**
Yep, we can hardly wait for the next one—in a year's time.

88 **TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003**
Again, we can hardly wait for the next one in a year's time.

74 Sega Soccer Slam
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NTSC Vs PAL

US or Japanese code reviewed in order to get a timely report to you. Major changes before PAL release are rare. But we will keep you fully informed if they do occur.

European releases are all PAL code. If publishers delay PAL review copies then we will review NTSC in order to give you an accurate picture of a game before purchase.

MISSED A COPY OF XGAMER? Then rush, rush we say, to page 92 for bite-sized thumbs-ups or death-kicks on every Xbox game ever.

HOW WE RATE...

To make our review verdicts as clear as possible we use a 0 – 10 scoring system. On the XGamer scale 0 is pure evil and 10 is sheer genius. Want to know more? Here's the complete guideline...

10 An act of God. It'll change the way you think about gaming.

9 A benchmark buster. So good you'll never want to put it down.

8 Excellent, a must play. Games this good are few and far between.

7 Worthy, but lacks that certain something. Still enjoyable though.

6 Fun at times but spoilt by a few glaring errors, worth renting.

5 Bland, unoriginal, flawed or mediocre.

4 Hampered by serious gameplay defects.

3 Unbelievable and uninvolving. Crap.

2 An insult to the Xbox. It makes us angry.

1 No, no, no. "Step away from the game!"

0 It's not a game. It's a criminal offence.

XGAMER REVIEWS POLICY

HONESTY

We're honest. That's it. Sometimes you'll disagree with our reviews (and if you do, tell us about it), but all reviews are ultimately subjective. XGamer uses the best videogame journalists in the business. They're the best because they're people with strong opinions on games. Passionate, experienced, pioneering gamers. Gamers like you.

VERSIONS

We'll always tell you what version of a game we're reviewing. Imported games from the US and Japan will be marked as NTSC and we'll review those only when PAL (or European) code is unavailable.

REVIEW CODE

Publishers provide us with pre-submission game code to review. Games at this stage are awaiting final approval from Microsoft and are usually a few weeks from release. It is standard magazine practice to review at this stage (only no one else will tell you about it), to ensure the reviews appear in the shops before the games do. Publishing a review after you've bought the game is no service to anyone. We only review this early code when we receive assurances from the game's publishers that only minor, cosmetic changes remain to be made to the game before release. If there are any score-altering differences between the code that we review and the final retail version, you can be sure we'll tell you about it and name and shame the publishers involved.

JUST GAMES

We love videogames. If you want to read about music, comics, DVDs or books go somewhere else—we'll stick to what we're good at.

THE VERDICT BOX...

You'll have read the review, but... hmm... that's not entirely satisfying is it? What's needed is a handy digest of the conclusions. Something to round it off like a lovely choccy mint after a curry. Et voilà!

XRATED Your guarantee that the game's been played to the limits of human endurance.

Gameplay The meat of the matter. It may look and sound great, but is it actually challenging and fun too?

Graphics We want games to look great *and* play well too. Not too much to ask of an Xbox, is it?

Overall Rating The important bit. All the parts, sifted, argued, discussed and decided upon.

Accessibility Need a degree in astrophysics to play this? Or can you just pick it up and have a laff?

Depth Will you swap it in a week? Or will you still treasure it in the old folk's home?

Reviewer's Hi-score Proof that we've been through hell to get you an honest review. Beat us if you can...

XGamer Verdict The good, the bad and the ugly neatly summed up in a pithy sentence.

38 HOT & STICKY OPINION PAGES!

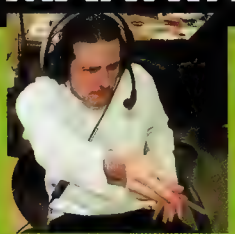
DO NOT MISS...

HIT LIST Every Xbox game in one big loving hunk. Page 92

TACKLE Everything hard is here except for my... Page 98

MONTHLY MINGER *Fila World Tour Tennis.* Just a sack of cack tennis game knocked out on the cheap. Page 82

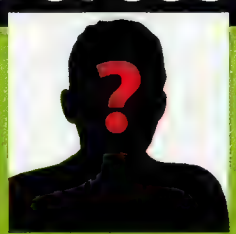
MANNING THE KEYBOARD OF JUSTICE...



MARK DONALD
Specialist in Somerset
Loves His house on Bath's Royal Crescent where he sings his red pen at suits

LEE HALL
Specialist in Sport
Loves To ponder his next call in life. Will it be as a magician—or a call-girl?

DANNY CURLEY
Specialist in Rhyming Slang
Loves The dirty smell of the big bad city and battling Bath landlords for his deposit back



RICHARD KEITH
Specialist in Crazy Catting
Loves Introducing himself as a Rolling Stone and kicking footballs 'til he's nearly dead.

JIM MCCAULEY
Specialist in Fawlty Towers
Loves Showing the ladies his hovering manhood and raising the dead with herbs

AL BICKHAM
Specialist in Millionaiming
Loves Writing a thousand pages a week for his early retirement and Mini-Milks

SEGA GT 2002

Like an unadulterated river of fun, running directly into your brain. Welcome to *Grin Turismo*.

On sale
Friday 8 November

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Racing
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Widescreen, Dolby Digital, custom soundtrack
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.xbox.com/segagt2002

company

- **Developer** Sega
- **Publisher** Sega
- **Contact** 0161 827 8061 www.gamenation.com

How long can the average human arse sit in the same chair without suffering some hideous medical indignity? I reckon I'm doing pretty well—six hours of solid *Sega GT 2002*, and despite a certain stiffness of the limbs, I'm still hot for more. Even my shrunken walnut of a stomach can't growl loudly enough to make me get up and do something about it.

Can't eat, either. Too busy playing.

And when was the last time *that* happened? The first time I played *Halo*, I guess. And there's the crux of the matter: *Sega GT 2002* is a *shockingly* addictive game. Remember the ongoing drip-feed thrills you got from *Gran Turismo*? Same deal.

GT mode lies at the heart of this game, and the bit that makes it nigh-on impossible to holster your joypad, hang up your spurs and call it a day. It's a massive, open-ended experience in which you buy cars, race different events, make money, upgrade your motor, buy more cars, complete driving licences and so on. There's a bewildering array of real-world cars on offer, and every time you step into a new one, it's like tasting a new kind of fruit. You can really feel the differences between them, from the way the chassis rolls back under acceleration and lurches forward when braking to the revviness of the engines. Some are heavy in the rear; some are more unpredictable in sharp corners than others. This differentiation between the performance, weight and handling characteristics of each car is what gives the game such a subtle but far-reaching measure of variety.

EVERY TIME YOU STEP INTO ONE, IT'S LIKE TASTING A NEW FRUIT

But the real clincher is that *Sega GT 2002* makes a ravenous consumer out of even the least materialistic of wheel bandits. You're never truly satisfied with what you've got. By way of example, I recently sold my cherished Renault Clio and Peugeot 307, both of which I'd upgraded to the armpits. I then combined these funds with every last groat I'd saved from race wins to buy the car I'd been coveting for days: a soft-top Honda S2000. And it's gorgeous—darts around the track like a swallow in full flight and goes like spink.

AXLE OF SPEED +5 However... the standard model is completely unmodified. It doesn't even have racing tyres, for Pete's sake. So at first it's simply a case of putting the pared down vehicle through its paces, winning more races, scoring more cash and bolting on a few new parts. And then, *even then*, you're not quite satisfied. You're constantly thirsting for a new driving experience. It's like an RPG, with cars and mechanical widgetry replacing the flaming swords and magic trousers. You're forever looking to trade up, better your performance through tuning and expensive accessories, and participate in bigger races for greater cash prizes, so you can buy more stuff. Onwards and upwards.

TOOT, TOOT!

XGAMER FAVE BIT

Ripping around a corner, clipping the apex, then hammering down on the gas to pull away again while overtaking less skilled cars on the inside—to the dulcet sounds of *Firestarter*. Capital, old boy.

QUICK START

Car mechanics ain't rocket science. Plug and play's the name of the game—but we're not complainin'.

EPIC The GT mode is where it all happens. If you're looking for a veritable RPG of a racing game, then *Sega GT 2002* will be all over you like a rash.

STARTLING The level of detail involved is mind-blowing, from the accurate recreation of real car models to the minutiae of handling and performance.

EAR-MUCK Inexcusably appalling background music. Fortunately, you can make up for it with your own custom playlist from the Xbox hard drive. Ah, much better.

Canon
Canon is the official camera supplier

MAIN VIEW

E500---This is a Mercedes version of "a p'

REPLAY

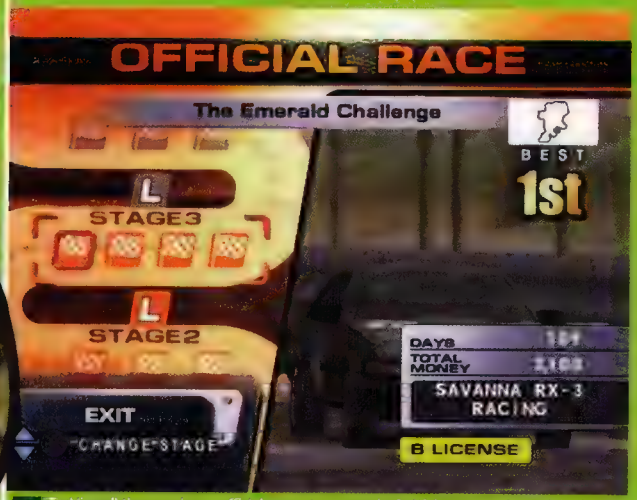
CHANGE CAR CHANGE CAMERA MAIN VIEW

PLAY IT AGAIN, SAM

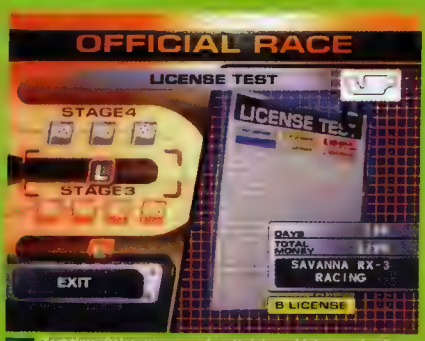
Every race is recorded for you, so you can view it after you've crossed the finish line. The camera tool is quite powerful, enabling you to switch angles and oversee the race from any car's point of view. Sheer viewing pleasure. Also, check out the blurring, which leaves cars further away from the camera out of focus. The game's rammed to the giblets with such neat visual details Boss.

LICENCE TO THRILL

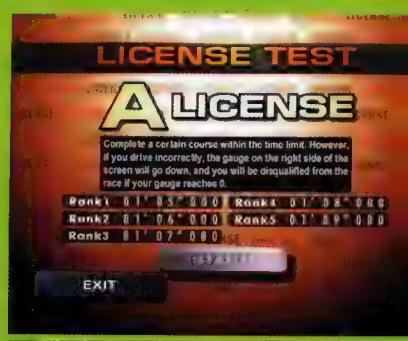
It's fun to jaff around with the event races, picking up cash to fund your growing automania. Before long, though, you'll yearn for deeper challenges—which is where the official races come in. These are split into categories, according to which licence you hold. Once you've completed all the races in one category, you can tackle the next driving test, earning yourself a higher licence and gaining access to the next category of races. Note also that one-off event races become more difficult as you attain new licences, although the financial rewards increase to reflect this...



1 Tackling all the races in one official race category can be fruitful—you can win special-edition cars for your trouble. Now this Emerald Challenge looks interesting...



2 Test time. Raise your game by attaining a higher grade of licence and the financial rewards on offer flourish.



3 When it comes to the test, you need to follow the instructions to the letter—or face disqualification.

4 [illegible] with no upgrades whatsoever. Tricky stuff.

5 Once you've got your new licence, all the one-off event races become tougher and more lucrative.

GREASER'S DREAM

Half the fun of *GT 2002* is upgrading your jalopey to squeeze every last drop of performance out of it. As you win races and accrue cash, you'll spend aeons browsing the wares in the parts shop, wondering which bit of your beast is next in line for buffage.

Engine tuning falls into two categories: turbo kits and natural aspiration tuning. It's one or the other, sadly—you can't have both. Then there are performance mufflers, tuned ROM kits, polished exhaust ports and all manner of other add-ons designed specifically to boost your BHP. But a car that just goes fast in a straight line is no good to anyone; handling is equally important.

Indeed, shocks and tyres are among the most important bits of kit you can buy, because they eliminate chassis roll, facilitate quicker turning and enable you to carry more speed through the corners.

Naturally, such upgrades don't come cheap. If you're looking for quick solutions—to give you enough oomph to get through a couple of tough races, say—then it's worth paying the used parts shop a visit. Here, you can pick up parts at a fraction of their new cost. However, never treat them as more than a temporary fix; they break quickly.

But by far your biggest concern should be degradation. Without regular, frequent services and fresh sets of tyres every few races, your pride and joy will swiftly degenerate until it has all the performance characteristics of a three-legged pony. It's expensive, but very important to keep your car in tip-top condition.

Hmm. When cars are overtaking you on the outside, you know it's time for a boost. Man cannot survive on new tyres alone. After all, a wise mechanic treats his car holistically, you know.

Watch with pride as your favourite dream machine races during the action replay—it's an activity you'll inevitably (and gladly) engage in.

friends. But there are other things clamouring for your wallet's attention. These cars aren't bullet-proof, remember. As they undergo wear-and-tear on the track, performance begins to diminish...

It's most noticeable with your tyres, because these undergo a more rigorous pounding than any other part of your car. If you're being super-critical, you'll notice a minor drop in performance after only a couple of races. After about six or seven, they're next to useless, causing you to slide all over the road, with increasingly poor acceleration and braking power. A new set doesn't come cheap, and your engine, brakes and suspension also require constant, costly workovers at the mechanic's shop. All in all, it's a pricey business—but worth it, because if your car's not in tip-top condition, you won't win races.

WINNING STREAK And winning races is, of course, what it's all about. In GT mode, the races are split into two categories: Official and Event. Officials are used for progress; after a round of three of four races around different courses, you get to take a driving test. If you pass, you're awarded a licence and allowed into the next level of races. But there's a price to pay for going up in the world. As you take tougher driving tests and attain higher licences, the game recognises that your skills (and your buying power) must be on the up, so all the races become much, much harder.

Event races offer a wide variety of specialist one-off competitions. You might want to try your hand at the One Make Race, where you're pitted against a squad of other cars identical to yours. Or, if you've a supercharged beast of a car that does straight lines like an oversized bullet but has trouble hustling through the twisties, then you'll want to try Drag Racing, where two cars battle for the quickest straight line quarter-mile from standstill. The event races are where you pick up the biggest cash prizes, but, again, as you attain new licences, the competition gets a lot stiffer.

CHOICES, CHOICES And that's the great thing about *GT 2002*: the game's structure is free-form enough to let you do exactly what you want to do when you want to do it. You can pootle along, winning the odd race, working on building up a couple of cars at once. Alternatively, you can go straight for the licences and burn your way up the ladder to fame and glory. It's totally up to you. Better, still, the gameplay doesn't get any harder unless you start accepting new challenges.

BURN YOUR WAY UP THE LADDER OF FAME AND GLORY

To win bigger cash, you need to get higher grades of driving licence. If you don't go for the licences, the game floats quite happily at your level. In a sense, then, *GT 2002* doesn't get more difficult until you ask it to, and when you do, it rises to

SMART CARS

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING
9/10, XGAMER 01
Tricked up TTs and new Beetles go head to head in Xbox's debut racer. The original and, until recently, the best.

BURNOUT
7/10, XGAMER 04
Quality high-adrenaline racer, marred somewhat by endless, tedious replays. Good, but still irritating.

RALLISPORT CHALLENGE
8/10, XGAMER 02
Fights its corner against most rally games and comes out smiling. Wicked, mud-churning fun.

SHOP 'TIL YOU DROP...

...or at least until your bank manager drops—stone dead of a heart attack. If you want top performance in this game, be prepared to dish out top dollar for the privilege. Dream machines like these come at a fittingly pretty price.

Ooh, a yummy Dodge Viper. This hugely popular American model is a very desirable slice of car kittery. Some might say it's overpowered, but if you're into drag races, then what's the beef?

Now come on. We've all harboured dreams of owning an Audi TT. It's the epitome of modern design—and a bargain (yeah, right) at twice the price of many other cars housing similar performance specs under the bonnet.

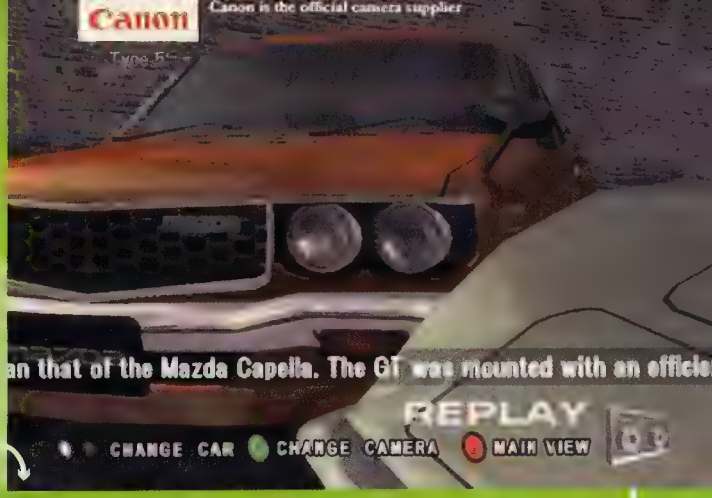
SEGA GT 2002

BAD REAR ACHE

Analyse your mistakes and gush with joy at *GT 2002*'s evocative action replays.

1 Swing the camera around at the right moment and you can snap shots like this.

2 As you flick between the different cars, you get a potted history of each one.



3 Wait until the action hots up and snap a picture to hang on your garage wall. This is such a decent feature. We approve. It really adds a personal touch to proceedings.

CHROME SWEET CHROME

MAGIC MOMENTS

Hung on your garage wall are all the photos you've taken during action replays. Remember that corner? And what about that terrible crash? Ah, lovely.

THE FORGE

Visit the garage to tweak your car's performance and handling. Go on, increase that camber and treat yourself to a mint-scented dangly thing for your rear-view mirror. Nice.

SHOW OFF

Go on, you know you want to. And why not? It may be an unnecessary extra, but this winnings trophy table is just one of many extras in *Sega GT* which add to the experience.

RETRO CHIC

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challenge your burgeoning driving skills and improved vehicle performance. This makes for an immensely engrossing experience.

But there's more... Alongside the GT mode, you get quick battles (pick a car and go head-to-head with the CPU or a mate over split-screen), time trial (speaks for itself) and chronicles. None of us really have days at a time to devote to a game, so if it's a quick and tidy experience you're looking for, but with a little more depth than basic arcade races, then chronicles mode fits the bill nicely.

You're presented with a selection of retro cars, from the Seventies onwards, which you then take into a series of races through the decades. As you win races, you're awarded points, which you can then spend on an upgrade after each race. You can rip through a session in around an hour, which is ideal for an evening's play. In between races, you even get short little history lessons, detailing the burps and quacks that the automotive industry has experienced through the decades. These interludes are bristling with juicy details, from crises faced by the petroleum industry to why sports utility vehicles are the most popular cars around today. Interesting stuff, even if you've only a passing interest. And you'll be king of the hill the next time you play *Trivial Pursuit*.

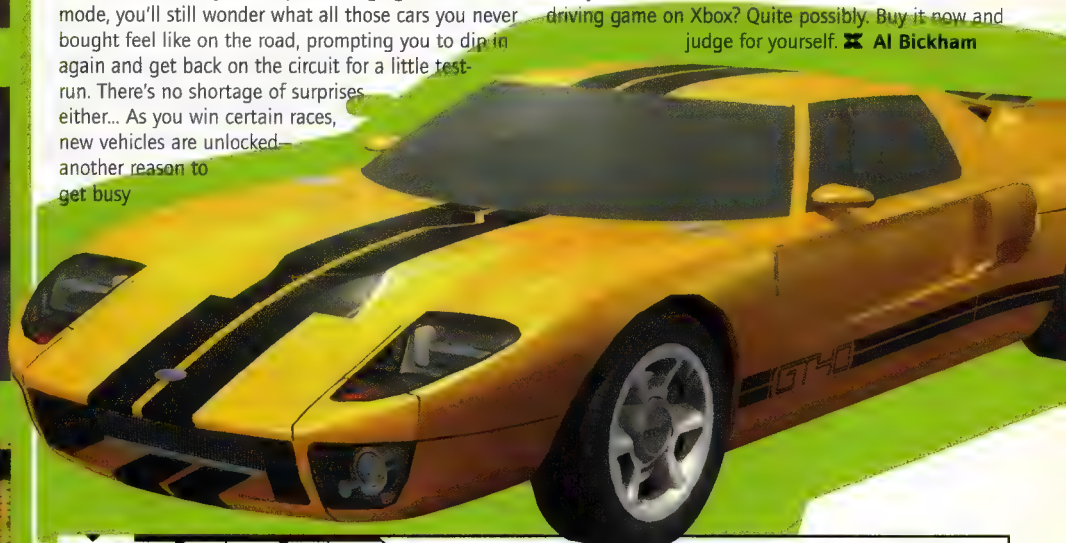
IT'S LIKE A ROLE-PLAYING GAME, WITH CARS AND MECHANICAL WIDGETRY REPLACING FLAMING SWORDS AND MAGIC TROUSERS...

WHAT A GAS Oh yes, you get a whole lot of game for your money. You'll play it for months to come, and even if you complete the gargantuan GT mode, you'll still wonder what all those cars you never bought feel like on the road, prompting you to dip in again and get back on the circuit for a little test-run. There's no shortage of surprises either... As you win certain races, new vehicles are unlocked—another reason to get busy with the Official races. In addition, certain goodies only become available when you follow a specific sequence of events. Complete the second season of races, then win the hot-hatch event, for example, and the super racing muffler hits the shelves in the parts shop. There's even a one-shot nitrous oxide kit that appears from time to time at the used parts shop, which can only be used in—you guessed it—the drag racing section.

Expect to see some massive cheat guides to this game in the near future—there's a garage-load of goodies squirrelled away.

BIGGER AND BETTER And while we're hesitant to draw comparisons between *Project Gotham* and *GT 2002*, for they're both excellent games, we'll risk the wrath of our readers and state that you'll get many more hours of play out of this 'un. There's just so much to do, such a weight of kit to buy, and so many varied and characterful motors to experience. It really is the business.

There's even some stuff which is utterly unnecessary, but fun all the same. During the superb action replays, which can be viewed from a variety of dynamic angles, you can capture those divine driving moments to preserve and cherish forever. Wait 'til your car's taking that perfect corner, then snap a shot and hang it on your garage wall, where you can view it at any time. From start to finish, it's a class act, and one that you'll obsess over for months to come. The best driving game on Xbox? Quite possibly. Buy it now and judge for yourself. **Al Bickham**



RATED SEGA GT 2002

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Not perfect, but high quality nonetheless.

Gameplay 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
An intricately constructed and utterly addictive experience.

Accessibility 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Can you steer a car? Then dive in.

Depth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
As deep as you want it to be.

9

GAMER VERDICT The most detailed, impressive and enjoyable driving game out there.

Reviewer's hi-score > **Five consecutive rounds of drag racing completed.**

TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

Snowboarding with size, substance and a lot of bloody big jumps. Hold on to your bobble hat and goggles...

On sale
Friday 8 November

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Snowboarding
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Memory unit
- **Version** PAL
- **Movie** www.transworldgames.com/snow/

company

- **Developer** Housemarque
- **Publisher** Infogrames
- **Contact** 0208 222 9700 www.infogrames.co.uk

Unless you're a pro snowboarder, playing *Transworld Snowboarding* is the closest you'll *ever* get to a true powder rush. Picture it: You're cruising down the side of a mountain, a clear blue sky, the wind in your hair, working the snow. A handy tump provides the launch pad for an 80 metre jump. You hit it spot on and pull a BS 720 Nosebone and land it perfectly. The honeys swoon. The *guys* swoon. You are the snow daddy. In real life? You'd have a mouth full of bloody snow and no feeling in your legs...

Forget the embarrassing bruises and loss of limbs gained through trying to do it for real, in *Transworld Snowboarding*, you really are a snow king. Taking on the role of a pro snowboarder, you undertake the daunting Transworld Circuit with the aim of proving your boarding prowess in all disciplines. There's technical trick-based challenges on half-pipes and long jumps, freestyle downhill events, race-focused boarder rallies and unmapped back country courses.

In fact, Housemarque has covered all possible bases. Tony Hawk's-influenced challenge lists are provided for every level and boarder rally sections rely on you performing tricks to increase boost, thus giving you an advantage over competitors—a concept ripped straight out of *SSX Tricky's* book. Progression through the tour is achieved by racking up challenge points and in total there's some 18 huge courses to unlock. It's an impressively massive game.

MIST ANYTHING?

It's also very fast. And very, very high... Vertigo sufferers needn't apply. On the Alps Road course, there's one point where your speed tops 130kph. It all feels rather exhilarating until out of nowhere the ground disappears and you can only *just* see the bottom of the hill through the mist. For Chrissakes, land upright or you'll die. Better still, perform a triple backflip with an indy mute grab thrown in for good measure. Oh, go on.

Boarder rally stages throw in the competitive edge. Here it's essential to take advantage of sneaky grinds and quick tricks. These increase your heart-shaped boost meter and give a quick burst of speed by pressing the B button. Without boost, you'll never come first. It's a clever way to encourage you to practise tricks without including anything so boring as a tutorial. Elsewhere, off-piste, cutting a swathe through unchartered snow and searching for new jump and grind opportunities gives a very real sense of freedom.

SPINAL SNAP

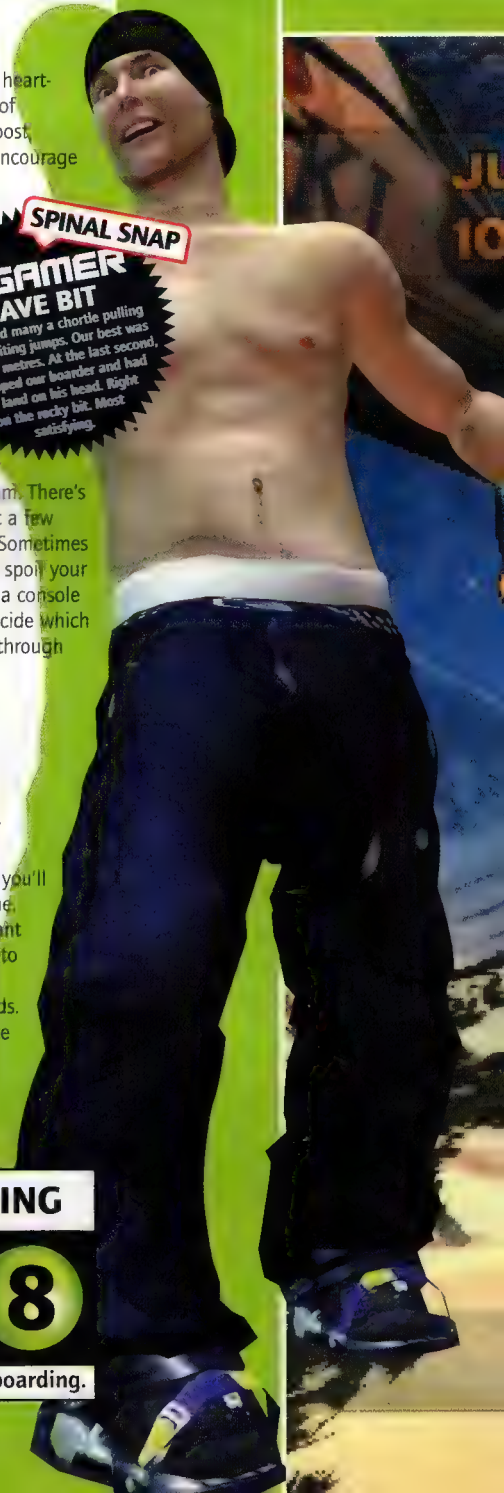
XGAMER FAVE BIT

We had many a chortle pulling death-baiting jumps. Our best was from 120 metres. At the last second, we flipped our boarder and had him land on his head. Right on the rocky bit. Most satisfying.

Best snowboarder on Xbox, then? Hmmm. There's a problem here. It's splendid fun, given, but a few things let *Transworld Snowboarding* down. Sometimes the action judders painfully. Not enough to spoil your enjoyment, but it just shouldn't happen on a console this powerful. Plus, the game can't quite decide which objects should be solid or not. We scooted through tree trunks—then dropped like a stone after colliding with a slopeside photographer.

FOR CHRISSAKES, LAND UPRIGHT —OR YOU'LL DIE

Having said that, it's definitely a game you'll come back to, offering immense replay value. While still pick-uppable enough for an instant burst of icy adrenaline, it'll take you weeks to reach 100% completion and unlock all the extra tracks, characters, costumes and boards. And for anyone convinced they can replicate the kind of tricks seen in *Transworld Snowboarding*, I salute you. Or slap you round the chops and say, "Don't kid yourself, pal." **George Walter**



RATED TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Sumptuously snowy. Looks the part, then

Gameplay 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Loads to complete and satisfyingly gnarly.

Accessibility 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Simple trick method and arcade feel to 'boarding.

Depth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
The biggest snowboarder out there

8

XGAMER VERDICT An epic adrenaline rush capturing the freedom and terror of 'boarding.

Reviewer's hi-score > **Transworld Park_11, 900**

TRANSWORLD SNOWBOARDING

RUN FOR COVER

Trick well in front of a photographer and you could make the cover of a magazine... This earns you both points and pulling power aprés board.

1

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3

4

ROTOR ACT To add to the real-time atmosphere, each level has plenty of vehicles zooming around.In this one, there's a nifty chopper buzzing about.

LEVEL 5_LOST RESORT
3HRS:00MINS:00SECS

SCENIC It's halfway down the first back country course and we've gone for the middle route for its unspoiled vistas and uncluttered piste. After grinding past a photographer, the board's caught fire. Seconds later, we landed on that rail down there to complete a huge combo trick.

AERIAL When you ollie off a ledge or rail and get big air, a kind of swooshy wind effect kicks in; it's as if the blood is rushing through your ears.

VERTICAL LIMIT Just look how high you are. You can't afford to land awkwardly when falling from 120 metres up—unless you fancy the idea of dying.

COLD SNAP The camera icon show how many points you need to score to gain the photo bonus and get on the cover of a magazine.

CHUTE PLANNER Okay, you know what the map does—but look a little closer. See? There's three different routes down this particular course.

REVENGE OF THE FIRE At certain points in levels, tanks of burning oil ignite your board. This not only looks pretty, it also boosts your score.

QUICK START

Pick it up and start playing—that's the only way to acquire the skills of a true board master...

CIRCUIT TRAINING Okay, so you could dive into the Transworld Circuit, but WAIT! Have a little practice first. A good introduction to the basic trick set is the pressure-free Free Session.

GENDER WARS Pick any rider from the character select screen. At this stage, it only matters whether you want to play as a girl or a boy as their individual talents won't make much difference.

POWDER TACTICS There's only one board unlocked, so grab it and hit the slope. Concentrate on perfecting your grind (●) and familiarise yourself with the right analogue stick for grabs.

MYST III: EXILE

"Darling, I won't be much longer. Just. A. Few. More. Years..."

On sale Now

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Adventure
- **Players** 1
- **Supports** Memory unit, Dolby Digital
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.myst3.com

company

- **Developer** Presto Studios
- **Publisher** Ubi Soft
- **Contact** 0870 800 6160 www.ubi.com

MYST MADNESS 'N' MERCHANDISE

The *Myst* series has sold more than 11 million units to date, and has spawned countless fiction novels and a sizeable online community of fan-based websites.

If you were one of the millions of gamers who lost friends, jobs and sleep in the mid-'90s thanks to the best-selling *Myst*, then you might want to kiss your significant other goodbye before putting yourself into another self-imposed exile.

Myst III: Exile begins roughly ten years after *Riven* (*Myst II*). Atrus and Catherine, the hubby and wife from the first two adventures, have re-established contact with the lost D'ni civilisation. Atrus is after Saavedro, a thief who stole a book that details where his people are planning to move to. If the book isn't retrieved, it's sure doom for the folks back home.

COFFEE TABLES For the uninitiated, these games have you navigating around a surreal island and through various ages, all the while solving tough brainteasers to undo Saavedro's evil machinations.

Because of its strong emphasis on rich graphics, the *Myst* series has been likened to an interactive coffee table book, a slow-paced digital journey through pretty pictures. But don't be fooled: at times, the conundrums can be fiendishly difficult.

Graphically, the game looks stunning, featuring a 3D engine so players can spin around a full 360 degrees. And unlike its forebears, there's more "life" to these worlds—birds fly, water ripples and gurgles, etc. And you can interact with D'ni characters (real actors, in fact) on a much more involved level. A New Age soundtrack adds further atmosphere.

Solitary adventuring tailored to the needs of the more cerebral gamer, then. **Marc Saltzman**

RATED **MYST III: EXILE**

It's not everyone's mug o' mead, but those who relish *Myst*'s quirky blend of sight-seeing and puzzle-cracking will lap it up. **7**

SNAP HAPPY

Clear blue skies, a dream-like littoral and walkways aplenty—it could only be another instalment of *Myst*. The puzzles either irritate or enthrall, depending on whether you like doing jigsaws or not...

1

2

3

Distributed by

INFOGRAMES SEGA

PlayStation 2 XBOX NINTENDO GAMECUBE

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EL FUEGO

CAUTION
Highly Flammable

SEGA SOCCER SLAM™

Extreme Players. Extreme Football.

DEAD TO RIGHTS

Did you know, 'The Triad Dogs' is an anagram of 'Dead To Rights'? But then, so is 'Great Odd Sh*t'...

COMPLEX COMBAT

XGAMER FAVE BIT

Gunfights are intricate—you do more than just stand and shoot. You can dive aside, close in for brutal one-shot kills, send your Alsatian in to tear a goon's throat out, or grab one as a human shield. Nasty.

On sale
November

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Third-person shooter
- **Players** 1
- **Supports** Widescreen, Dolby Digital
- **Version** NTSC
- **Movies** www.xbox.com/deadtorights/default.htm

company

- **Developer** Namco
- **Publisher** Electronic Arts
- **Contact** 0870 243 2435 www.ea.com

Ever tried digging a hole in bone-dry sand? As soon as you scoop up a mittful, more of the stuff rushes back down the sides to fill in the hole. Not something to get worked up over; it's just the way of the world. However, when you've just forked out £40 for that kind of experience, it becomes an issue.

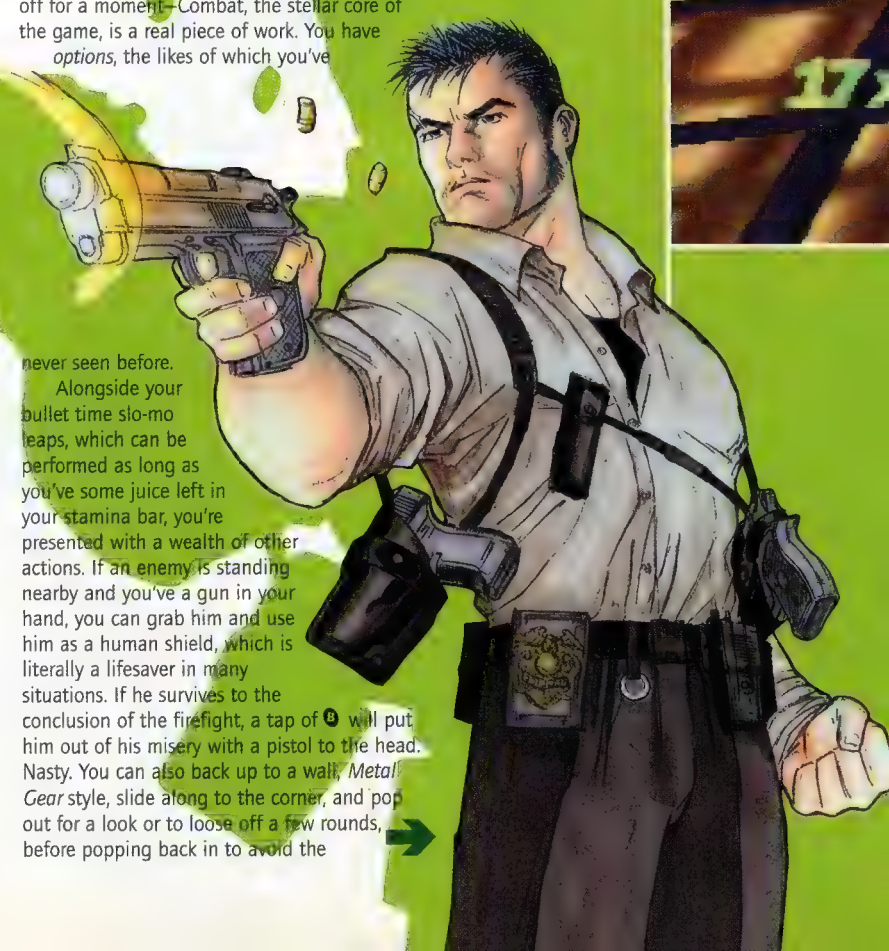
That's how it feels to play *Dead To Rights*. You mow down countless trigger-happy gangsters, and more flood in to plug the gaps. You work your way through some of the toughest levels you've ever played, and just when you're thinking 'hmm, I'm *long* overdue a well-earned easy bit', the onslaught begins afresh, with tougher challenges, harder baddies and more complex levels. We like to be kept on our toes, for sure, but this is just too much like hard work.

KILLING IN THE NAME OF...

But we're jumping the gun; let's see what it's all about. You've probably heard words to the effect of *Dead To Rights* being 'The new *Max Payne*', and in truth, we thought it would be, until we got hold of the final article. About the only two things that Jack Slate (our main man) really shares with Max are his mid-combat bullet-time leaps and a third-person perspective. And the bullet-time leaps are fiddly as hell to perform, often making them just too much of a risk to use when the chips are down. Can you see where this is going?

On with the show. On a quest to discover the whos and whys behind his father's murder, Slate goes on a city-wide rampage, hitting crime syndicates, bosses and whoever else the trail leads to. And—hats off for a moment—Combat, the stellar core of the game, is a real piece of work. You have *options*, the likes of which you've never seen before.

WE THOUGHT IT'D BE THE NEW *MAX PAYNE*, UNTIL WE GOT HOLD OF THE FINAL ARTICLE



Alongside your bullet time slo-mo leaps, which can be performed as long as you've some juice left in your stamina bar, you're presented with a wealth of other actions. If an enemy is standing nearby and you've a gun in your hand, you can grab him and use him as a human shield, which is literally a lifesaver in many situations. If he survives to the conclusion of the firefight, a tap of B will put him out of his misery with a pistol to the head. Nasty. You can also back up to a wall, *Metal Gear* style, slide along to the corner, and pop out for a look or to loose off a few rounds, before popping back in to avoid the

QUICK START

There's a good tutorial, but here are the basics you need to get your head (and hands) around.

TARGETING Hold down the right trigger to target an enemy. From here on, you'll track him with your guns until one of you is dead, you cycle to another target or you let go of the trigger.

RANGE When you target an enemy, a crosshair appears on him. When the crosshair's green, he's way out of range. When it's yellow, you'll hit him but infrequently. When it's red, you can't miss.

PRETEND YOU'RE OLDER THAN YOU ARE Or, you'll have trouble buying this game—it's an 18Cert.

BAR FLY Life, stamina and your human shield's health, in that order. Stamina builds over time and lets you perform bullet time slo-mo moves.

MEAT-SHIELD Grab a nearby enemy, and you've got yourself an effective, if short-lived shield. Naughty but nice.

AMMO HUNT The stuff's in short supply. After every firefight, you'll find yourself hoovering up any and all dead mens' guns.

CLOSING IN If you let any baddies skirt around behind you, your shield won't last. Be swift.

AKM Assault Rifle

LEVEL_GRAVEYARD
14HR:42MINS:26SECS
SCENE Cargo plane
PROBLEM Hold full of hoods
SOLUTION Screaming meat-shield

MAN GOT MOVES

2

1

3

DEAD TO RIGHTS

TAKE 'EM DOWN

When your ammo's spent, there's no groovier–or snappier–way of getting stocked up for the next kill...

1

2

5

4

3

LEVEL_5
5HR:22MINS:
SCENE Not-so-deserted graveyard
PROBLEM Clown-gimps attack!
STATUS Desperate

TARGET PRACTICE

The key to success in combat is knowing how to target right. You don't just point your guns and shoot... when faced with enemies, a tap of the right trigger will target the nearest. Repeated taps cycle through all of them. And when you're facing down ten heavily armed and angry goons, your trigger finger had better be up to the task...

3x1

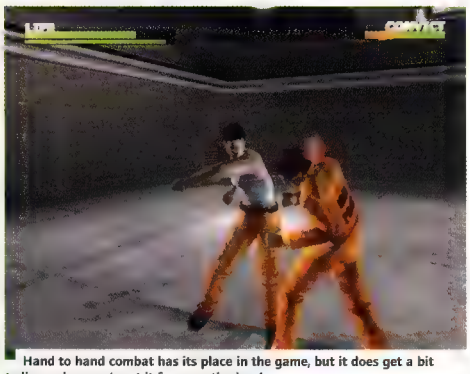
PEEK-A-BOOM

FISTS AND GUNS

BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER
6/10, XGAMER 06
Vamp-purging thumper that lacks essential oomph

MAX PAYNE
9/10, XGAMER 02
The King of third person action. Pop-gun now officially essential

BLOOD OMEN 2
6/10, XGAMER 03
Iffy combat and samey action. Ho hum.



Hand to hand combat has its place in the game, but it does get a bit tedious when you're at it for an entire level.

inevitable reply.

Ammo's at a premium in this game, and you'll find yourself running dry almost constantly. It's a good thing in some respects, as it forces you to prioritise your weapons-use—not wasting shotgun shells on far-off targets, for example. But when the inevitable happens and you're out of guns, pinned down by an army of thugs with seemingly *infinite* reloads, you've still a couple of tricks up your sleeve. The first is Shadow, your loyal four-legged friend. Select him as you would a weapon, target an enemy, and off he scampers for a mawful of goon-meat. When he's finished making a dog's dinner of your foe, he then returns with the man's pistol, which is ace. But if Shadow's not available (some levels don't allow him), you can still go down the hand-to-hand route, charging headlong in with fists and feet flying. It's normally suicidal in a gunfight though, and so best kept for single enemies.

OLD-SCHOOL GAMES OFTEN COME WITH A HIDEOUS PRICE TAG, MINDLESS REPETITION

NECKING IT The last of your combat moves is the takedown. When your hands are empty, you can run up to an enemy and tap B to perform a lethal neck-breaking move, at which point the camera pans back, the world goes into slow-motion, and Jack gets brutal. There's a great variety of different takedowns, and you're even able to view them from a range of camera angles.

Certain levels see you completely weapon-less—such as Jack's stay in Iron Point, the local clink. Various punch/kick combos can be performed, as well as throws, and in practice, the whole system works well enough. But here's the point in the game where you start to reach a few major conclusions about where it's all going. The fighting seems endless—you pound your way through stacks of inmates, only to receive a new objective—which generally involves pounding your way through stacks more. By the end of the level, you're itching for some gunplay.

But the next level begins, and the feeling persists—you're killing thousands of meat-necks, but where's it really getting you? What's the point in all the hideous repetitiveness?

SMALL WONDERS Namco has clearly twigged that the game needs more variety, so every now and then, you'll tackle a mini-game. For example, back in Iron Point, you've got to beat a prisoner's record on the punch bag, so a unique game begins, where you tap B and A in rhythm to keep the punches going. The tempo soon rises, and as it does, your sense of timing is really challenged. Most levels have one or two of these, and they do make a nice break. But soon enough, it's back to the inevitable grind.

In one sense, *Dead To Rights* is a classic, old-school videogame. The stakes are constantly upped, and you're often forced to improve your techniques or re-think your approach to a situation. But old-school videogames often come with a hideous price tag: endless, mindless repetition. Some scenes just go on far too long, and even early on in the game, you'll confront situations so tricky that you'll see more of the loading screen than you do of the game. Tragic. It gets so much right, but remains flawed nonetheless. So at the risk of seeming glib, we advise you to take £20 out of the £40 you might've spent on *Dead To Rights*, and net yourself a second-hand copy of Max Payne (if you haven't already got it of course). It doesn't look as good but it's a damn sight more fun. Life's too short to be playing games that frustrate you as much as *DTR*. **Al Bickham**

One of the mini-games on offer is this turkey-shoot, where you lean out of a chopper and mow down a virtual army.

RATED DEAD TO RIGHTS

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Not cutting edge, but Namco-crisp.

Gameplay 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
When it's good it's good, but repetition's a killer.

Accessibility 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Big *and* tough. But you may tire before the end.

Depth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Fantastically intricate combat system, but again...

6

GAMER VERDICT Despite some brilliant touches, it still disappoints. Shame.

Reviewer's hi-score> **Four** take downs_**in 22 seconds**

LMA MANAGER 2003

Expletive-savvy heart-attack case wanted for field-side rantings...

On sale
November

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Football management sim
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Memory unit
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** None

company

- **Developer** Codemasters
- **Publisher** Codemasters
- **Contact** 01926 814 132 www.codemasters.com

At last, *LMA Manager*–the darling of the consoles–takes on *Championship Manager*–the poster boy of the PC brigade. Get your tickets here. Or don't, because although they play in the same league, these are very different players.

While *Championship Manager* is all tactical depth and slightly tarted up spreadsheets, Codemasters has always intended *LMA* to be accessible to anyone who wants a bit of Premiership glam in their management games. So you get easy-to-use controls and self-explanatory option screens, plus a 3D in-game engine and a *Match Of The Day*-style highlights package with Gary Lineker and Alan Hansen.

The basics of football management are all here, naturally. With transfers, team tactics (although a lot fewer than you'll find in *Championship Manager*) and training at your fingertips. You choose a team from one of Europe's top leagues and are then given a preliminary task by the board for the season (play-offs, top six, European qualification, etc). Your real job–and always the best bit of management games–is to improve your team in the transfer market.

Here, *2003*'s transfer window causes problems, as you can only dabble in the market twice a year–between seasons and during January. This does make it more of a challenge, but takes away some of the fun. It also puts a big emphasis on the matches themselves as the main meat of the game.

And it's here that *LMA Manager 2003* struggles. Once you've picked your team and fiddled with your tactics, you can either watch the whole game, making tactical changes and subs, or see the highlights and let the CPU take charge.

Unfortunately, the 3D engine is a bit ropey, with a limited number of animations meaning every goal goes through the keeper's hands and all players have the turning circle of an articulated lorry. The highlights option is close to useless, too, as Hansen's dire voice-over tells you little you wouldn't know by just watching the thing. In fact, you'll stop watching the highlights soon enough– what a pointless waste of space and resources...

There are other niggles: the repetitive need to 'disconnect' from the pretend digital channel, Football One, where all the results and highlights are presented (namely, the need to click 'yes' every time to confirm you want to 'disconnect'), as well as the badly designed 'email system' you get your info from (the set-up forces you to switch back and forth between different screens with annoying regularity).

ALL PLAYERS HAVE THE TURNING CIRCLE OF AN ARTICULATED LORRY

For an essentially user-friendly game, these annoyances mount up to make *LMA Manager 2003* not nearly as enjoyable an experience as it should be. And that's a shame, because there's always a place for an accessible footie management game to take on the mighty *Championship Manager*. **Richard Keith**

WHAT HE SAY?
XGAMER 1 RESIGN!
Hansen might be great value on *Match Of The Day*, but in *LMA Manager 2003*, he's all cliché and repetition–fave generic crackers include: "And then this happened..." and "This bit was next".

RATED LMA MANAGER 2003

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Gameplay	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Nice FMV and front end, but 3D engine doesn't do the job.		The lad can play, but the flash extras just get in the way.	
Accessibility	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Depth	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Easy to pick up and play but you have to do the legwork.		It'll get you hooked, but there's no tactical depth.	

7

XGAMER VERDICT Slick but shallow management game, marred by niggly faults.

Reviewer's hi-score > **West Ham 5, Man Utd 2 at Old Trafford, with Di Canio injured.**

IN THE DUG-OUT

CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER SEASON 01/02
9/10, XGAMER 02
Low on frills, high on stats-based immersion in all things management.

OVER TO YOU, GARY

When all you've got is lots of options screens and ropey animations, you expect much better than this.

1 *Football One*, or whatever it's supposed to be. Codies invented it for *LMA* last time out and are obviously keen on it.

2 and highlights via this 'channel', including the pointless ramblings of Lineker and Hansen. Our advice? Don't even bother.

3 these screens to return to the 'action' (we use the term loosely—management sims aren't renowned for destroying joypads).

4 was sure last time and I'll be sure the next time, too, and if you keep asking me I'm going to spit my dummy out and stop playing.

QUICK START

Not got your coaching licence yet or a tatty old sheepskin? Welcome to the *Minute Manager*.

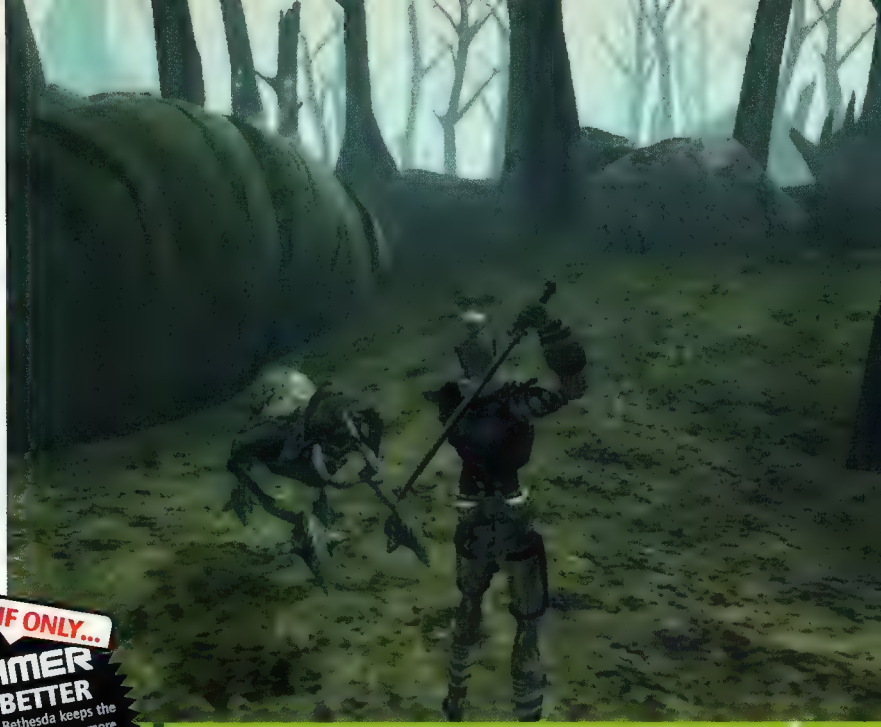
THE KNOWLEDGE Head straight for the main mode and pick your team. Think about it, though. You want a challenge, but it's unlikely this is the game you should play if you want to take Exeter to the Champions League final (see *Champ Manager* for that).

BACK SEAT In *LMA Manager 2003*, you pay other people to train the squad and look after your business, but it's worth checking they're on top of things every now and again.

INVEST TO IMPRESS You only have a few months to pick and scout for players. To avoid demoralising your team, sell off dead chaff bit by bit.

THE ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND

The notorious RPG finally comes to Blighty. But is it any friendlier?



On sale
Now

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** RPG
- **Players** 1
- **Supports** Dolby Digital, Memory Unit
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.elderscrolls.com

company

- **Developer** Bethesda Softworks
- **Publisher** Ubi Soft
- **Contact** 0870 800 6160 www.ubi.com

We covered why you should be very wary of this RPG in our extensive review of the American version back in XGamer 07. For anyone who's failed to amass the complete collection of the world's finest Xbox magazine, here's the short version. *Morrowind* is too big, too unwelcoming, too beautiful for words in some ways (while being ugly in others) and hugely ambitious. By shooting for the moon, developers Bethesda have only made it half-way there, leaving them slightly lost in space.

Only *Morrowind*'s not set in space, but in a familiar fantasy world of elves, spells and sticky ends for the unwary adventurer. The great promise is the near unlimited freedom to carve your own path through an enormous gameworld. But that's also *Morrowind's* major downfall. It's all too easy to wander around feeling lost and directionless. This drifty sensation is worsened by uninspired dialogue and hundreds of unimaginative quests which make you question whether it's really worth pursuing the complex character development options.

IF ONLY...
XGAMER BIG ≠ BETTER
We're hoping Bethesda keeps the faith and can come up with a more promising sequel to *Morrowind*. The company needs to realise that it's not size that counts, but what you do with it...

Dodgy combat—it's hard to know whether you're swinging and missing or just standing too far away.

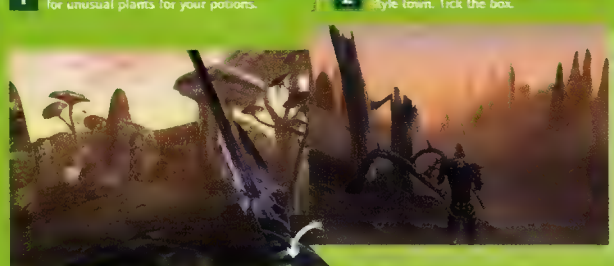
GOOD MORROW! Character building lies at the heart of the *Morrowind* experience. Taking its cue from the likes of *Everquest*, there's a real need to improve your rep from first-level weakling to heroic powerhouse, capable of slaying the worst of the island's monsters with a pair of nail-clippers. The system's perhaps a little too involved and arcane, but will please the stats and skills tinkerers. Throw in the ability to create your own spells and potions (not to mention the rampant hoarding of powerful items and weapons), and what you really have is a by-the-numbers RPG that'll stroke the cloak of any dungeon-bashing traditionalist.

The US version we reviewed in September's issue was plagued by bugs, the worst of which we haven't encountered in the UK release version. But it's still possible to 'break' some minor quests by doing deeds in the wrong order. And when you're unsure whether you've done that, or simply not reached the right conversation thread with a key character, it becomes painfully apparent you're just playing a game. The spell is broken. **Ross Atherton**

ISLE BE BACK
The island of Vvardenfell is a place of great extremes, making it an intriguing and beautiful place to get really frustrated in.

1 for unusual plants for your potions.

2 style town. Tick the box.



4

3

RATED MORROWIND

A deep and massively ambitious RPG which shoots itself in the foot (with a Longbow of Mighty Power +5, yadda, yadda). **6**

Reviewer's hi-score > Cutting short the unpleasant activities of the game's baddest necromancer.

TIMESPLITTERS 2™

"THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL PURCHASE FOR ANYONE IN POSSESSION OF A PLAYSTATION 2"
10/10
PlayStation.2 GOLD

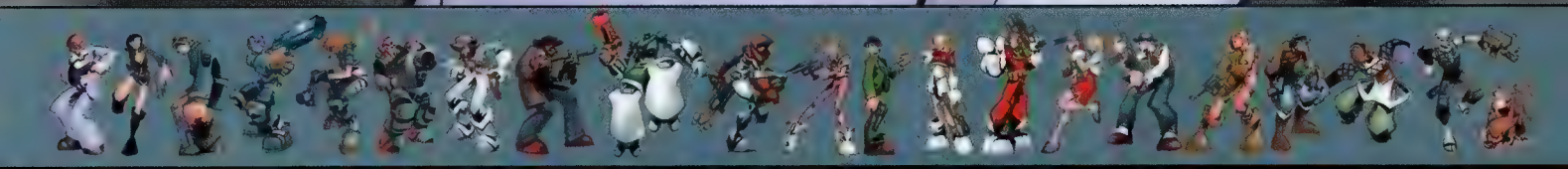
"NO ARGUMENTS, NO EXCEPTIONS IT REALLY IS THAT DAMN GOOD."
9.5/10
CUBE

"AN INSTANT CLASSIC, WITH THE BEST MULTIPLAYER MODE OF ANY CONSOLE TITLE"
9/10
X GAMER

"GAMEPLAY THAT ACTUALLY MANAGES TO SURPASS THAT OF THE LEGENDARY GOLDENEYE"
10/10
P2

"REFUSES TO LET YOUR HEART BEAT AT ANYTHING LESS THAN 170BPM"
10/10
computer and video GAMES

THIS IS SOME DAMN COOL SH*T!



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PlayStation.2

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SHAKEDOWN WITH NO BREAKDOWN

Shakedown Day, the brief period of minor testosterone-venting which takes place just before a rally, enables you to tinker with your car, test the current [illegible] and [illegible] the Telemetry [illegible] and [illegible] stand the suspense, you can also have a nose around the forthcoming stage terrain, the option to squat down near a spanner-cranking mechanic, muttering about [illegible] knowingly, is [illegible]

time overall. There's no between-stage Service Area, so the trick is to pace out the

out to drive three Special Stages, followed by a quick service,

XBOX ONLY

MULTIPLAYER BONUS

You can subvert the whole against-the-clock rally thing by turning the game into a four-player free-for-all. The other versions have to make do with a maximum of two players. Haa-haaaaaaaa...

COLIN McRAE RALLY 3

Rallisport Challenge was chugging along nicely, and then, with much flashing and honking, along comes this reckless tailgater...

On sale
Friday 25 October

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Driving
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Dolby Digital, memory card
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.codemasters.com/redirect/redirect.php?url=/colinmcrae3/front.php

company

- **Developer** Codemasters
- **Publisher** Codemasters
- **Contact** 01926 814 132 www.codemasters.com

On his website, Colin McRae describes rally driving as "a sport for winners". He would do. Colin wins, you see. A lot. He's won more rallies than any other rally driver. In 1995, he was the youngest ever (27) world champion. They call him the Flying Scotsman—because he's Scottish, and he drives like an absolute lunatic. The website's obligatory front-page poll invites browsers to predict who will win the World Rally Championship this year. Colin is winning that, too. He's on 42%. The man below him is on 7%. In the specialist world of Xbox rally-driving games, so far, it's been a two-car race. *Rallisport Challenge* pulled a bit of an unfair advantage on *Colin McRae 3* by sneaking a seven-month start. Surely Colin can't win this one, too...

It's the first next-generation appearance for one of the most bankable brand-games out there, and the temptation to use the extra power to buff up the frills must have been strong. But the Codies have kept it clean and uncluttered, ditching any trainer modes or licence tests and concentrating on the all-round experience of the global rally circuit.

MCRAE OF LIGHT

The pulse of the game is championship mode—a trawl through the entire world championship where, for the first time, you get to 'be' Mr McRae himself. It's a three-year contract over eight countries and it's take it or leave it. You don't get to be the Finnish guy for a laugh. You don't get to have a quick go on one of the mid-season races. You don't get to take a spin in a Subaru. Your name is Colin and you drive a Ford Focus RS WRC 02 and you have to get busy honing your technique on the early, more basic stages in preparation for the serious elemental challenges to come.

YOU DON'T GET TO BE THE FINNISH GUY FOR A LAUGH... YOUR NAME IS COLIN AND YOU DRIVE A FORD FOCUS

Attempting to run over spectators is a disappointingly fruitless exercise. As you can see, they're only cardboard cut-outs, anyway.

Each rally kicks off with a 'Shakedown Day'—a mooch around the service area, where the mechanics match the car set-up to the conditions and you get the option for a few personalised tweaks and a test-run. Normally, the whole business of customising suspension and tinkering with downforce is the deal-breaker for more casual driving-gamers. Here, it's kept simple enough for simple folk and authentic enough for petrolheads. You'll be fine without the fiddling (the mechanics are normally 99% sussed) but if you want it, it's here. It's one of the first examples of how the designers have managed to bridge the gap between arcade feel and simulation sensibility.

Project Gotham fans, be warned. There's no starting grid, 'rival' drivers or cosy road markings here. Rally driving is a race against the

clock, against unpredictable road surfaces, angry elements—against nature. It's chucking a far-too-powerful car around devilish hairpin bends, through blizzards of mud and gravel. Unlike the sterile scientifics of *F1*, the cars are built to take punishment. If they don't get it, you're not driving properly. From the moment you roar away from the starting post, there's a terrible power to the car which seems completely at odds with the skiddy, gnarly environment you're expected to force it through very, very quickly.

GRIST FOR THE MILL Luckily, McRae's co-driver Nicky Grist, is the man charged with spotting the forthcoming twists, dips and hops. He reels off his shorthand jargon 'pace notes' in an unusually relaxed Welsh brogue—always accurate and timely. The art of

THE BONNET SUDDENLY SPRANG UP, THEN FLOPPED OFF AT THE NEXT BEND...

the game lies in how well you can match the drive to his direction. With 56 distinct, often very long, stages, there's no chance of memorising the geography or relying on 'laps' to correct mistakes. The environments are always totally convincing, if a little static. Sunsets and tree textures are warm and lush, but a touch of dynamism would've been nice—there's the usual blurry crowd scenes and little in the way of interaction apart from the odd flattening of a minor marker.

Still, it's not a stunt game and, wisely, most of the focus has been lavished on the Focus itself... The detail is truly fantastic. As you sling the car around, whipping up sleet and flopping into puddles, it builds up a satisfyingly lived-in crust of road-filth. Too much clattering of obstacles, and the wear and tear gets more serious—performance gets shakier, and finally, bits start dropping off, in a completely believable way. The bumpers don't just suddenly disappear. They break loose, flap for a while and then give up at the next prang. We had a moment playing with the in-car, first-person view, where the bonnet sprang up and, until it flopped off at the next bend, visibility was severely impaired. You could switch to the outside view, of course, but where's the sport in that?

PARTNERS IN GRIME Inside the car, McRae and Grist sway and pitch with every corner. Grist even grabs the roll-cage during the harsher collisions, and look closely on replays, and you'll see McRae steering, changing gear and caning the pedals. When the weather turns nasty, the in-car view incorporates smeary windscreen-wipers and some truly unnecessary backsplash droplet effects.

We're told that McRae has personally overseen the feel of the game. It's easy to be cynical about celebrity endorsements, but not this time. There's a smoothness and subtlety about the handling

QUICK START

This ain't no Classic FM-soundtracked trundle to Waitrose. Rule the road like an Italian cabbie...

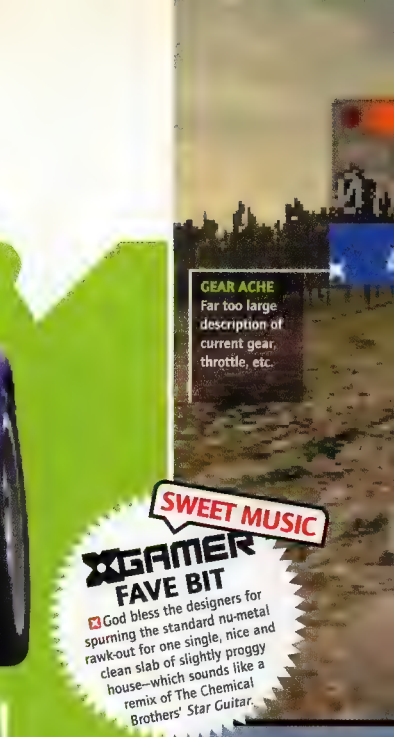
DON'T TOUCH THE CAR! It's always tempting to tweak the steering tension and twiddle with the downforce, but don't. Just go.

TRAINING MODE Go for a time challenge on some bendy track. Drive hard. Repeat until you beat the time. Then repeat again, chopping your personal best down as far as possible.

KNOW YOUR LIMITS Go for an insane joyride—and do everything at full tilt: jumps, hairpins, power-slides... You'll quickly have a 'top-end' feel for what the game will let you get away with. Simply ease off a bit and, in theory, you're a classy rally driver.

"CAN'T GET THE PARTS, GUV..."

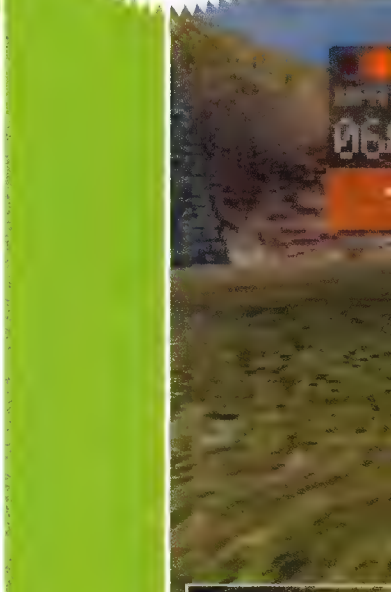
It's the big driving game debate—arcade or simulation? *Colin McRae Rally 3* is actually a bit of both. Well, a lot of the former and just the right amount of the latter. Once you've notched up a few decent wins, the game unlocks various parts which you'll need for later competitions (the right tyres for snow in Sweden, etc). You can fit and tweak things yourself on the car set-up screen, or just leave the job to the mechanics. Unless you're a hardcore rally fanboy, it's better to trust the grease monkeys. You'll probably break something, forget what you did—and then have to ask someone to help you fix it afterwards...



SWEET MUSIC

XGAMER FAVE BIT

God bless the designers for spurning the standard nu-metal rawk-out for one single, nice and clean slab of slightly proggy house—which sounds like a remix of The Chemical Brothers' Star Guitar.



The optimisation screen. You'll probably only need to worry about tinkering in very hard mode.

ONLY IN XGAMER

CLOCK SUCKER Not too sure why it's all timed in multiplayer mode, to be honest.

WHO'S IN THE LEAD? Get a quick fix on everyone's progress by glancing here.

FORD UNFOCUS Rally driving does allow for a bit of freedom, but it's best to honour the track system. Soon it won't be just your car that's over the hill...

LEVEL_MULTIPLAYER
10MINS:20SECS

SPLIT-SCREEN This is competitive mode, although you can go for a 'proper' rally experience and take it in turns.

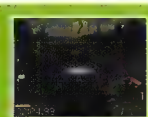
OVERHEARD "Which one are you?"... "I thought I was top-left!"... "Oh, this is stupid. I'm last!"

Why not mess with your suspension? If your springs are too soft, the car will pitch badly on corners. Still, what could possibly go wrong?

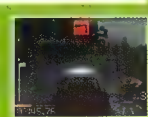
"YOU COULD GET A BUS THROUGH THERE!"

Your co-driver's pace notes *are* useful; you won't get far on hard-driving alone, so listen and learn...

It's all about distance, gear number and terrain features. You'll see that this is a hard left bend, but Mr Grist tells you how far away it is and what gear to take it in. Sadly, you won't be able to joyride all the way around. Slowing down is sometimes required. Dammit.



You could probably shut out some of the babble by improvising around the less extreme visual cues. Like this minor double-bend. There's also an icon for 'shallow bend' which entails the complex manoeuvre of slightly steering to the left or right. Ooh, challenging.



Occasionally, Grist will warn you of something potentially hazardous. This is a 'turn'—you can't scream around it at full tilt like you (just about) could with an extreme bend. He'll also warn you of bumps, jumps and uncuttable corners. What a nice man.

CARS AND GIRLS

Actually, no girls. Apart from the voguers at the winning ceremonies. Oh, and some persistent groupies who hassle you across eight different nations, including...

1 [illegible]

2 [illegible]

3 [illegible]

4 [illegible]

LEVEL_SWEDEN
1HR:30MINS

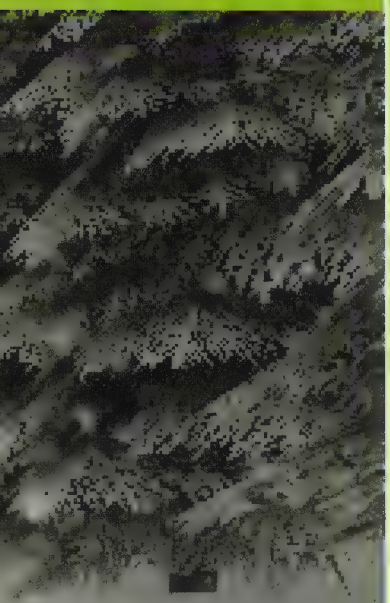
DIFFICULTY Very, very hard. But very pretty, too. Like driving around a Christmas card.

ARE WE THERE YET? No. No. No. But the poor visibility means you'll be relying on ol' Nicky's pace-notes even more.

SNOW BUSINESS

So, the time finally comes when you can't get away with just diving straight into the rally in your default set-up car. Well, you can, but it's better to test the ground with a few serious tyre tweaks. Hard, aggressive treads will have you skidding and squirming about like a pensioner on roller-skates. If only there was some way to unlock special snow-grip tyres...

5 MIAMI



that pushes everything beyond the standard trick of playing it as you would any other driving game. As (we imagine) in real rally-driving, it's all about mixing insane speed with instinctive manoeuvres which would be impossible at a fractionally faster speed and points-losing if executed slowly. The tension of the next split-second decision is ever-present and, for once, the chunky joypad adds to the brutish feel. The physics are spot-on, but the emphasis is still on playability and finding a workable driving style.

GENIUS

WHAT'S THE DAMAGE

The car damage model is so detailed, you can even play *Colin McRae Rally 3*–Stock Car Edition. Split-screen two-player... Just try to be first in turning your car from garage newborn to crumpled hulk.

Oops. You only get one wheel-change per rally. Don't do it again or you'll have to cobble through the rest of the course like a Reliant Robin.

TIME FOR A BRAKE

Because championship mode is so long and arduous, there's a default autosave which tracks your/Colin's progress every screech of the way. The challenge of reaching World Champion level gets rougher with every rally–more varied road surfaces, appalling weather and track hazards, stiffer competition... If you're missing the thrill of the chase, there's a one-off 'Super Stage' at the end of each rally which squares Colin off with his nearest leaderboard rival. It's a mad dash around a more enclosed, racing-style track, and if you win, the game unlocks enhanced kit and other goodies.

There's also a game outside of the career track–a more dip-in-and-out mode which lets you race other models (Lancer EVO 7, Impreza and other assorted, unlockable kit cars) in time attack or head-to-head style. This is the bit where you get to play with the toys unlocked in championship, and it's also where the excellent multiplayer mode lives. Either jack it up to four players for squinty split-screen action, or play alternatively and race against each other's times as in a proper rally. On top of the balanced design, the main joy of *Colin McRae Rally 3* is its accessibility. Clean, uncluttered visuals; friendly menu structures; realistic but playable handling... It's a game first, and a simulation a far distant second. The Codies have pulled off the ever-tricky balancing act of appealing to both serious rally geeks and less hardened driving-game fans.

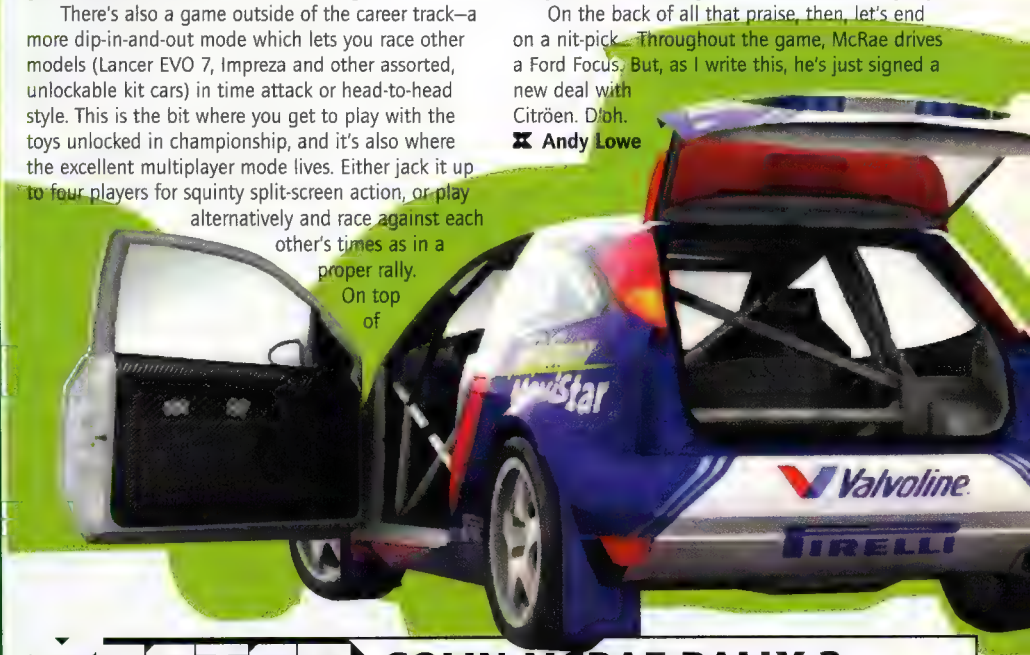
GAME FIRST, SIM SECOND–THE CODIES HAVE PULLED OFF A TRICKY BALANCING ACT

CLOCKING OFF

More general gamers might find the race-against-the-clock business a bit too intimidating, and there's a bit of commitment needed before everything clicks. The first few stages seem pretty remedial, but as the terrain gets less forgiving and the other drivers start to edge up, you'll soon forget about the lack of computer-'driven' cars (they're often too tough or too submissive anyway).

On the back of all that praise, then, let's end on a nit-pick – Throughout the game, McRae drives a Ford Focus. But, as I write this, he's just signed a new deal with Citröen. D'oh.

Andy Lowe



PEDAL BOXES

Plenty of other fine Xbox driving games to choose from, particularly if you don't like rallying.

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING
9/10, XGAMER 01
Out on the (geographically accurate) streets. Still the biggest and sportiest driving romp around.

NASCAR HEAT 2002
8/10, XGAMER 03
Looks lovely. Noisy, aggressive, but a bit samey. Import only.

SPYHUNTER
7/10, XGAMER 04
Something different. More mission based, but, weirdly, not as much fun as the original arcade game.

RATED COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

Graphics 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Not as sumptuous as *Rallisport*, but still pretty easy on the eye.

Gameplay 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Loose, fluid handling is as tuned to gameplay as simulation.

Accessibility 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Instantly easy to get on with.

Depth 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Superb as-Colin play, but what happens after the championship?

9

GAMER VERDICT As close as you'll get to real rally driving.

Reviewer's hi-score > ***I juuuust*** **about won the first (Australia) rally on 'Very Hard' difficulty level.**

SEGA SOCCER SLAM

Oh. My. God. If this is the future of football, please kill me now.

VOX POP
XGAMER FAVE BIT
If SSS has a reason to live, it's as a multiplayer game, with three of you either all on one side or against each other. Like the solo experience, it palls fast, but at least you get to pummel your pals post-pub time.

On Sale Now

game
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Arcade footie
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Nothing
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** None

company
- **Developers** Visual Concepts
- **Publisher** Sega
- **Contact** 0208 222 9700 www.sega.com

Despite the title, *Sega Soccer Slam* has little in common with football. What we have here is an arcade take on the great game which—Rollerblade-like—allows for lots of hitting, tripping, muggings and general violence. But unlike its nearest—and superior—rival, *Red Card*, this isn't football with fouling thrown in. This is fouling with a bit of footie thrown in.

The four-a-side, three-minutes-a-half games are fought between five teams that offer up all manner of comic stereotypes, each sporting their own playing style—crudely based on size, so slim players can run fast, but not shoot or punch that hard, and so on.

OWN GOAL Scoring is a matter of powering up ⓧ and guiding your shot past the mostly static goalies, or exploiting a full power bar to scorpion kick the ball, Higuita-style. Other variations are the *Matrix*-style super-shot (see 'Like The Movies') and the fire-assisted Turbo shot you get by pressing Ⓛ. The punching is far more prosaic and a question of being close enough to swipe or lunge at your opponent.

And that's all there is to it. Everyone just runs around, trying to hit each other and shoot. Scoring quickly loses its appeal and there are no real tactics to talk of, so mastering the game just kills it dead. We suggest you don't bother. **Richard Keith**

RATED **SEGA SOCCER SLAM** **4**

All-action arcade slap and kick-about which offers so little in terms of gameplay, it's almost painful.

Here, El Fuego's bunch of South American renegades (Rico, Maderia and El Diablo) are up against comic Scots bloke Angus, flash Italian Dante and snooty Frenchy Arsenault. Hilarious, non?

SMACK MY PITCH UP!

Winning the various competitions that litter the game—there are four main modes, arcade, quest, challenge and tourney, but lots (and lots) of sub challenges—opens up new games, skills, players and whatnot. Despite all this paraphernalia, you have to play the same four-a-side game in almost every one. Rather tedious, really.

This the quest mode. You have to finish in the top four in the league (of six teams) and then win the play-offs. Loads of challenges give you the chance to win money and refine players' skills.

LIKE THE MOVIES

Scoring goals is as simple as your average It-girl, but for some people that's not enough. They want to be able to make *Matrix* comparisons...

1 When scoring at will gets a tad dull, you can always liven things up...

2 ...by exploiting some of the game's extremely silly power-up shots...

3 Yep, flip the ball in the air using Ⓐ and ⓧ, then stand in the circle and hit ⓧ to unleash this *Matrix*-style super-shot. Damn, damn silly—but quite fun. For a few seconds.

SHADOW OF MEMORIES

Groundhog Day meets *Inspector Morse*? No, it's *Quantum Leap* meets *Silent Hill*.

By unsubtly tip-toeing past the blind brightly attired prostitute, Eike hopes to avoid any embarrassing small talk.

game
- **On sale** Now
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Adventure

company
- **Developer** KCET
- **Publisher** Konami
- **Contact** 0208 582 5573 www.konami.com

Concentrate. You're called Eike and someone is trying to kill you. They succeed in the intro. But then a mysterious benefactor gives you a time-travel device so you can seek out the underlying cause of your death, foiling plots while travelling between 1981 and medieval Germany. Brilliant, eh? Except that the first two chapters (of seven, plus a bonus level) virtually run on autopilot to explain all this, and most of the rest of the game's marred by explanatory dialogue.

With more interaction, more opportunities to change the future and more clever incidental touches, this could've been great. As it stands, it's a genius idea marred by sloppy execution. **Joel Snape**

"Beggin' yer pardon, sir, but if ye can't pay a tip, sir will be forcefully kicked in the knackers."

With so much bloody talking, it's no wonder somebody wanted to bump the fey natterbox off.

RATED SHADOW OF MEMORIES

Top idea ruined by clunky scripting and lack of things to do. If only Konami had its own time machine... **6**

The Script is...

"With great graphics, a wacky sense of humour and some frantic multiplayer fun, Loons has a lot going for it."
XBM, December 2001
...There is no script
Multiplayer mayhem! The infa... become the No. 1 star in H...
Microsoft, Xbox and the Xbox logo ... and/or others countries ... license ... Corporation in the US
© 2002 Infogrames. All rights reserved.
LOONEY TUNES, characters ... all related ... are ...
WBIE LOGO: ™ & © ...
(s02)

HELP THE AGED

throughout the entire game, Rage actually modelled the man five times to reflect how the Italian Stallion ages over time. This has more than a graphical impact; powers decline a

gym or you'll get dead saggy and smashed into atoms by the later hard chaps. Rocky's not the only one to get the fourth dimension treatment, either.

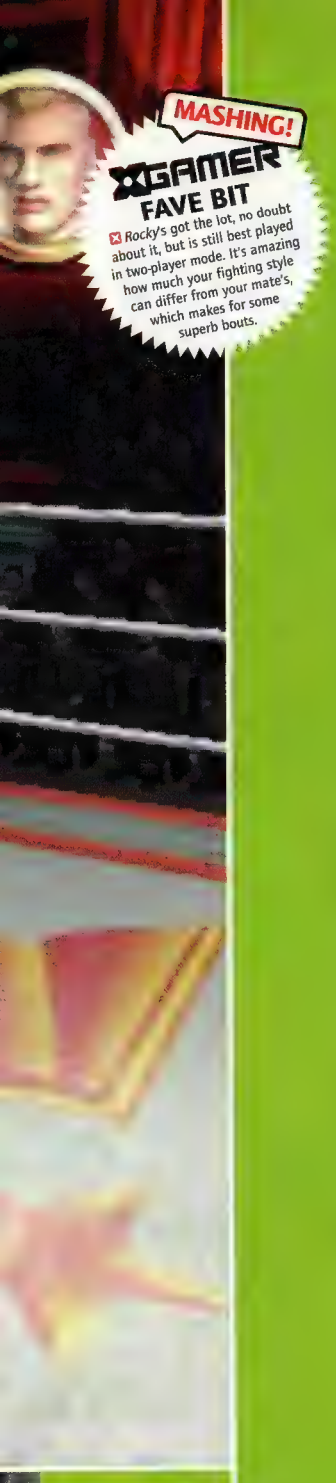
dragged in to grow

the third fight. If they even stuck one day's worth of age on him from his original grisly flesh-coat, he'd look like a mutant Quaver soaked in coke and covered

pretty sight...

versus a champion master of disaster, Apollo. To think they become mates later on.

the gym. Yes, sirree, this epic tale spans some 13 years.



MASHING!

XGAMER FAVE BIT

Rocky's got the lot, no doubt about it, but is still best played in two-player mode. It's amazing how much your fighting style can differ from your mate's, which makes for some superb bouts.

ROCKY

Take the reigns of the Italian Stallion and live the epic tale of man's struggle to gain normal talking powers sans ill-fitting gumshield.

On sale
Friday 8 November

game

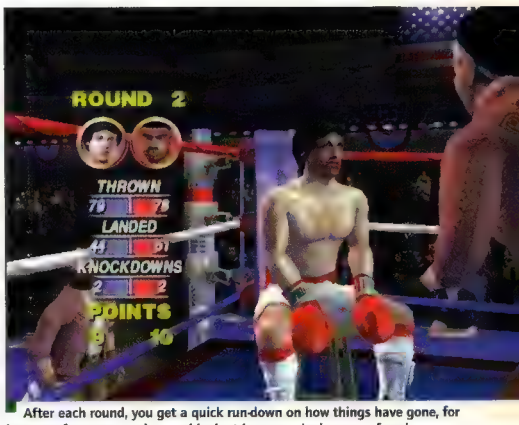
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Boxing
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Memory Unit
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.rocky thegame.com

company

- **Developer** Rage
- **Publisher** Rage
- **Contact** 0151 237 2200 www.rage.com

If ever a film series was a perfect platform to create a game from, it was *Emmanu...* sorry, I mean *Rocky*. It had everything—perfect end-of-level baddies in the form of menacing mouthy maulers, ace ways to develop your character's abilities by pumping iron and chasing feathery fowl, and allies that gave you nothing but ear-ache, be them angry little tramps calling you a bum or miserable girlfriends whining about your head popping if you didn't stop being punched.

After a 15-year wait (when Rocky flickered about the ring in an 8-bit horror show), the Italian Stallion's re-sewn up his graphical gloves and honed his arms for another volley of polygon punching. Fans of the Master System version (and judging by the letters we received on the subject, there are still quite a few) will be thrilled by Rocky's return in what's easily the best punch party since John Prescott chinned a mullet-headed egg-man.



After each round, you get a quick run-down on how things have gone, for better or for worse, and a good look at how smashed up your face is.

GLOVE STORY

The main game is the movie mode, which sees you progress from the hopeful nobody that opened the series in *Rocky* to the wise old master that closed it by battering Don King in *Rocky V*. The structure of this path is fairly simple and straightforward. Each film contains four fights in total, three made up chaps, then the end-of-film budgie. Obviously, seeing as the enemies get harder, it'd be unfair if Rocky wasn't given the chance to hone his clumping. So a well-stocked gym's on hand for our man to dive into. After each battle, you get two training sessions, and it's up to you which attributes you want to improve on. You can do mitt training to improve your strength, speed bag to improve your punch skills, skipping to improve your stamina, sit-ups to harden your determination and heavy bag for movement.

It's a great system and gives *Rocky* a real tactical edge: if you keep getting trashed, you can work out what your weak spots are and rework on them. You also get an extra training session whenever you lose a fight, so if you lost because your punch had the bite of a can of shandy, get on the mitts and turn your arms into small cannons.

A great aspect of man Rocky is the way he ages from film to film. He's like a spring chicken in the first

QUICK START

Sod the manual and all that 'reading words' nonsense. Let's jump in a swedge like a crackpot.

SPAR Jump into the sparring ring and learn some combos, otherwise you won't stand a chance in the ring. There's a list of all the punches you can weave together, so master a few.

EXHIBIT YOURSELF No messing, one-on-one punch fest. There's only a few fighters on offer; the rest will fall onto the menu after you've defeated them in movie mode.

ACTION The movie mode's the way forward, with lots of fighting and training. If you just want to pile in, use hooks by pressing ↑ or ↓ on the left trigger when punching; they're more powerful than jabs or straights.

flick, all young and innocent from the horrors of life. Then he sports a mullet, and it's one long dive into pension city—by *Rocky V*, he looks more mouldy than old dough. This has a slight effect on Rocky's performance; every now and then between fights a point or two drops off his statistics to indicate the rot programming. Most rude, but it hammers home the fact you're getting older. A lovely touch.

HOME STALLONE One thing that does take *Rocky* a few steps away from the normal boxing game is the extremely arcade fighting system. Unlike *Knockout Kings*, which crudely blends simulation and arcadia, this has been designed as an arcade game from the ghettoes up. A combo system, very much like that in *Tekken* and *Dead Or Alive* style beat-'em-ups, takes care of the multiple dig-action. You can weave a whole volley of jabs, hooks and uppercuts and it works a treat, marrying pick-up-and-play appeal with real depth.

Rocky is more than just a beat-'em-up, though. The whole game has been crafted to give you an all-round *Rocky* experience in keeping with the spirit of the films. Beautifully rendered cut-scenes recreate those important movie moments (Mickey's hilarious death only got a newspaper float across the screen), and all the characters have been immaculately modelled and closely resemble their film counterparts (apart from Mickey, who sounds more like Papa Lazarous from *The League Of Gentlemen*: "You're my wife now, Rockkkkk!"). Even touches like your trainer changing keeps the epic tale unfolding. Having Mickey turn into Apollo, then Apollo into Tony is a very nice touch. It's just a shame they all share the same horrific animation when they're in the ring giving you advice (they look like they've got a rat in their y-fronts and are begging you to remove it with your own fair hands).

...BUT MICKEY SOUNDS LIKE PAPA LAZAROUS: "YOU'RE MY WIFE NOW, ROCKKKKK!"

Getting off the canvas demands ever more frantic button-bashing—until eventually you need a road drill to stand a chance of returning to the fight.

You can taunt the other fighter, but it's wise to do it from a distance—or you'll be vulnerable to his super-punch.

But the negatives—an annoying Mickey (which, to be fair, is accurate to the film) and ropey animation sharing—are small beans compared to the banquet of ace combat on offer. Put simply, *Rocky*'s one of the best games on the Xbox, and well worth a fistful of your filthy lucre. **Dan Curley**

YAROO! XGAMER KER-CHINNED!
Rocky really gives you the sense that serious whacks are being served up. The way the heads snap back when a corking crack lands in the mush is superbly realised. Wonderful stuff.

HIT LIST

MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING
7/10, XGAMER 05
Above-average arcade slugger that's not a patch on *Rocky*, lacking its charm, sublimity and depth.

KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002
6/10, XGAMER 02
Another case of EA churning out a once-a-year update without crafting the bugger. Mutated from the simulation prequels and highly ignorable.

RATED ROCKY

Graphics	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Gameplay	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
Doesn't push the Xbox, but superb 3D crowd and FMV.		Fluid play-control and genuine desire to pummel the baddies.	
Accessibility	1 2 3 4 5 6	Depth	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
Hard at the start; you'll need to master the combos to succeed.		Big challenging story and multiplayer mode.	

8

GAMER VERDICT **Extremely solid and entertaining boxing sim—stick it in your 'box now!**

Reviewer's hi-score > cow-thrashing training_**11,750 points**

FISTS OF FURY

The training modes in *Rocky* are greater than good chippies and blend button bashing with rhythmic button touching to superb effect.

1 [illegible] chuck everything you've got, from quick jabs to hooks and uppercuts. Sadly, you can't take a baseball to Mickey's head.

2 [illegible] the light blue section of the bar. It takes enormous timing skills, but it'll make your punches fly like lightning in the ring.

3 [illegible] the training routines—and requires immaculately timed button sequences. The result is increased stamina and energy.

4 [illegible] carcass and let rip with all the combos Mickey asks for. This increases Rocky's speed, which is good for giving it toes.

RING OF BLOOD

In some early fights, there's a real sense of grit to the arenas. In this old church, where the film opens, the crowd even start throwing beer cans and bottles into the ring if they're unhappy with the fight. That, mixed in with the blood on the canvas, makes it a far cry from the super-posh fights later in the game, when the likes of Brigitte Nielsen turn up.

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

STRAIN!

XGAMER YOU STOOL!

You really have to wonder what Microsoft is playing at, allowing such a 'primitive' game out on Xbox. The frame updates with all the grace of an old man on the loo, copy of *The Sport* in hand, straining for a dump...

LEVEL_TROPICAL OPEN
00HRS:45MINS
SCENE Reversing down a short-cut
MOTOR BMW M5
FEELING "Yawn."

OOH, CHASE ME! This bar shows how much longer this specific copper will pursue you for. Once it's depleted, he'll abandon the chase.

ONE-POINT TURN This sign pops up to say you're going the wrong way. However, in this case, you're reversing out of trouble.

COP OFF Rozzers are your worst enemy. They'll do anything to knock you off the road. Even call you an SOB. How rude is that?

SHORT NOT SWEET This is me *before* I nipped into that nifty short-cut. Seconds later, it all went horribly wrong. Damn cops, man...

CUTTING IT FINE This isn't the main road shown on your map; it's a side road short-cut. Keep your eyes peeled for these lifesavers...

WHEN COPPERS ATTACK

The Fuzz park at the side of the road, waiting for you to drive by, before leaping out. Their ramming slows you down and can possibly spin you out. Worse, if they cram your car into a barrier and slow you down for a few seconds, you're busted.

1 The Polis spring out of nowhere. Look [illegible] distance. Nothing so far...

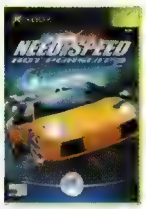
2 Yaroo! The swines try to ram you up [illegible] spin you off the road if you're not careful.

3 And they won't leave you alone until [illegible] for a side road as an escape route.

4 Eventually, when the blue bar is [illegible] What a bunch of wimps. Ahem.

NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

Nothing do to with cheap and nasty recreational drugs, but giving it toes from moustachioed rozzers in a turbo tin can.



On sale
Friday 25 October

game
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Street racer
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Nothing
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.needforspeed.com

company
- **Developer** Electronic Arts
- **Publisher** Electronic Arts
- **Contact** 0870 243 2435 www.ea.com

The world is full of rum buggers, folk who flick two fingers up at law 'n' order and screw everyone else. Jeffrey Archer's one example; high-speed road racing freaks are another—and if highway hogging at top whack tickles your chin, then *Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2* could be for you. Flashy cars, angry Dibble, open roads, and, oh dear, a frame-rate that feels like watching *Bagpuss* during a maniacal blinking sesh.

Need For Speed's been bouncing around more platforms than an exotic background dancer at a Puff Daddy gig. How does this version serve the Xbox? Exactly like you're meant to serve the law in the game—with a two-finger salute. The Atari ST frame-rate and bland landscapes are just the start of it...

The two-player modes aren't any more enjoyable... Play feels as silky-smooth as rolling over a pile of pebbles in a hair shirt.

SMELLY ARSEPHALT

The premise is fair cop. You get to drive exotic cars on the highway in a fashion guaranteed to give your licence more points than the Irish get every Eurovision Song Contest. The hot pursuit mode's arranged oddly in a tree-like structure, with success in one 'branch' heat unlocking others further down that 'branch'. These challenges vary in shape and size: a timed sprint from A to B, a race against fellow wide-boys for a high ranking...

Some of the short-cuts lead you into areas like this car park. Coppers may pursue you off the beaten track, too, so keep an eye on that rear mirror.

Unfortunately, the roads are littered with the boys in blue, who do everything they can to ram you off the road. Drive like a demon and you can outrun them; sometimes, if things get a little hairy, they even give up the chase. Bomb-dropping chopper-coppers add extra 'danger' to the mix. To be honest, it's all rather silly racing pseudo-laughs.

Each heat offers up a different set of cars, all of which have appeared—and looked better—in a million other racing games. They all feel similar to drive, too. And as for the impression of speed, riding the back of a three-legged dog would prove more thrillsome...

A few twists and turns are buried amidst the menus, but none are much fun. This game feels like it's being played through a tub of treacle and seriously lacks any redeeming charm. **Dan Curley**

QUICK START

Feel the need for speed? Then jump in the fast lane and zip into top gear with this easy guide to top fuzz evasion.

HOT PURSUIT The series of heats are arranged in a simple if unusual tree-like structure. For each heat you win, you unlock others, so you can (kind of) pick your own way through the game.

LOTUS An Elise for you, sir? Get used to how this great car feels and you'll be able to transfer your driving skills to rival jalopeys. They all feel similar.

CAMERA You can flick through the few camera angles by pressing Ⓧ. The really smart-looking one is set a fair bit back and high up. It looks very arcadey and affords you a neat view of any attacking Dibbles. (It's a pain to familiarise yourself with, tho'.)

RATED NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

Graphics 1 2 3
Jerkier than Jamaican beef; everything looks so basic.

Gameplay 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
The terrible frame-rate and bad handling leave you uninspired.

Accessibility 1 2 3 4 5 6 7
As easy to put down as it is to pick up.

Depth 1 2 3 4 5 6
Reasonably large and multiple tree structure of levels

4

GAMER VERDICT For the Xbox, this looks disgraceful. Leave it in the compound.

Reviewer's hi-score> **Lotus Delivery** 4m 25s

TAZ WANTED

Mad Oz marsupial in platforming zoo hokum. Question: is Taz *really* wanted?

On sale Friday 25 October

game
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Platforming
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Nothing
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** www.looneytunes games.com

company
- **Developer** Blitz
- **Publisher** Infogrames
- **Contact** 0161 827 8061 www.infogrames.co.uk

Yosemite Sam's a bit of a rum fella. Forever twiddling his russet dwarf porn-star moustache, all he ever seems to do is shout 'n' holler, grab his double-barrels and empty them chambers like a horny redneck. Now he's kidnapped Taz and his girlie as attractions for a new zoo. But Taz has escaped his cage, King Kong style, and gone on the run...

It's age-old platforming stuff, the aim of each level being to destroy all the Taz Wanted boards and engage in a myriad sub-objectives—smashing crates, eating sarnies, leaping hazards... you get the idea. Naturally, levels are strewn with obstacles and evils, such as keepers who try to scoop you up in nets. To avoid capture, Taz must jump into a phone booth, where he can disguise himself and exploit a new attack method. See a keeper—and you need to find a booth. Simple—and, sadly, rather tedious.

While *Taz Wanted* does its job—the colourful cartoon levels please the eye and give the game a suitable sense of depth—there's a ridiculous twist of ease and difficulty as you play. Many unintuitive puzzles demand a trial and error approach, yet you have infinite lives to play with. Careless acts aren't penalised, which leaves little reward for skilful play. The result? Another one for the kids... **Dan Curley**

RATED TAZ WANTED

A lovely looking platformer that could've been great if a few design flaws had been fixed at an earlier stage. **5**

Yes, the snow level. Funnily enough, you slip a lot on the ice. Now that's never been done before...

Ooh! See the cutey eggs jump! Prepare the toast and get the water boiling. They'll pay.

Building consistent lines of blockage is the way forward. One step forward, two steps back, eh?

EGGOMANIA

Crack the shell by all means—just peg your nose first to stifle the stink.

On sale Now

game
- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Puzzle
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Memory Unit
- **Version** PAL

company
- **Developer** HotGen
- **Publisher** Kemco
- **Contact** www.kemcogames.com

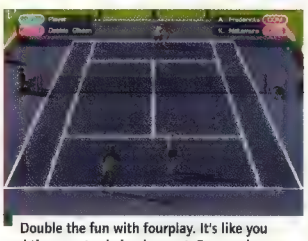
Eggs. I mean... come on. Couldn't developer Hotgen have found a better basis for characters? What about monkeys? Monkeys are funny. Eggs are not. Still, for a minutes-to-learn, lifetimes-to-master *Tetris*-alike, *Eggomania* is fun for a while. Build falling blocks into steady lines and the first one to the top of the screen wins. Simple.

What's not so simple is facing the soul-destroyingly incidental music between levels, the tragic character animations and the fact that you're spending 40 groats on something that would run equally well on a Game Boy. **Al Bickham**

RATED EGGOMANIA

Bog-standard puzzle game. Admittedly, it's better than *Tetris Worlds*, but it should still be a third of the price. **4**

"Hit the ball!" says one player to the other. "No, you hit the ball!" he replies. Apathy rules.



Double the fun with fourplay. It's like you and three mates being in court. For murder.

FILA WORLD TOUR TENNIS

Trendy sports brand makes a racquet in what should've been *Dunlop Tennis*...

On sale October

game
- **Price** £29.99
- **Genre** Tennis
- **Players** 1-4

company
- **Developer** Hokus Pokus
- **Publisher** THQ
- **Contact** 01483 767 656

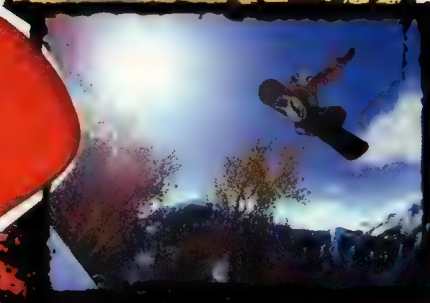
It takes balls to release a tennis game outside of the Wimbledon fortnight. But then it shouldn't matter a damn if the game's top, like *Virtua Tennis*. Sadly, *Fila Tennis* is anything but. Being able to buy Fila shorts in-game is no substitute for breathtaking rallies, judged-perfect aces and dance-inducing sub-games.

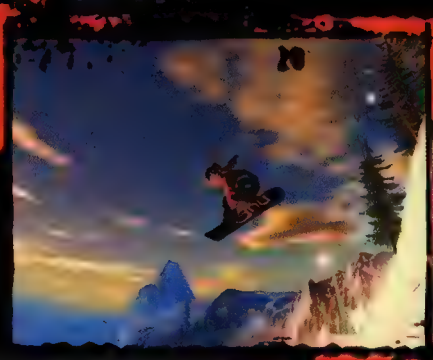
Prunes and semolina to *Virtua Tennis'* strawberries and cream, *Fila Tennis* fails on all fronts. It's a clunky and charmless affair, where even the umpires' voices annoy more than a wasp in your pint. **Dan Curley**

RATED FILA TENNIS

Like a pair of Hi-Tec trainers—cheap, does the job, but reduces your chances of copping off to that of a pig in a girdle. **4**

SNOWBOARDING REVOLUTION!





Name : Andrew crawFord
Occupation : ProfesSional Snowboarder
Favorite TricKs : Railing LipSide

"DON'T EAT YELLOW SNOW"

"Killer soundtrack featuring Electro beat, Hip hop, Punk + Punk-rock music styles" APOLAVIA

Halfpipe, snowpark, freeride, backcountry, indoor contests PLUS an exclusive urban jib session in the street of "SLC GHETTO".

Featuring 10 pro snowboarders : Andrew Crawford, Todd Richards, Kevin Jones, Jussi Oksanen, Tina Basich, Wille Yli-Luoma, Peter Line, Barrett Christy, Nicola Thost, Daniel Franck

ONLY ON XBOX

XBOX

developed by housemarque

www.billabong.com www.transworldgames.com www.rossignolsnowboards.com

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ATARI

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003

DON'T I KNOW YOU?

Face modelling has always been an inexact art, as demonstrated by the diverse physiognomies on display during *FIFA Football 2003*. Take a look at this little peeler puzzler, for instance.

1 Here's Thierry Henry storming in for another goal (the boy's a bit special). The rest of the team resign themselves to the inevitable nylon-shredding demonstration.

2 Sure enough, the goal's a cert—and that's the celebration! My God, yes, this really does look like the boy Terry. So yes, so realistic (for a polygon ball-player).

3 But here the equally lethal Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink thunders in a winner for London rivals Chelsea. At this distance, things don't look too bad.

4 Until that celebratory close-up reveals the horrible truth... Oh my God! Who the hell are you? Even Jimmy's own mother wouldn't recognise him.

TAP TO TOE

XGAMER BEST BIT

The best thing about this *FIFA* is the fact that short passing is now nice 'n' easy and as God intended. Just press down on B and, if you're facing the right way and use enough force, it'll go to the right man.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003

It's the comeback of the season as *FIFA* grabs the Xbox footie crown.

The game even tells you when you should move up a difficulty level. Here we're pulping a team in Semi-Pro; soon we'll be told to move to Professional.

On sale
Friday 1 November

game

- **Price** £39.99
- **Genre** Football
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Memory unit, Dolby Digital
- **Version** PAL
- **Movies** None

company

- **Developer** EA Sports
- **Publisher** EA
- **Contact** 0870 243 2435 www.easports.com

After *FIFA World Cup 2002*, it's fair to say that we weren't expecting much from *2003*. Sure, they told us they'd changed it. But then they always say that. We even heard from people who'd been out to Vancouver to see the thing being made, who said it really was different and that we'd like the results. *Jeeesus.* We've been hearing this stuff for years, and every time we've been proven right when yet another sorry schlop of code landed on our desks.

So, surprise, surprise if our somewhat affected world-weary cynicism wasn't dealt a hefty slap in the face when we finally loaded up the review code and settled down for what we expected to be the same kind of almost-football mess as last time. Because, guess what? Blow us down! If *FIFA Football 2003* isn't one hell of a great game and a whole bundle of fun that every self-respecting footie fan and Xbox owner should go out and buy.

But... Yes, there is a but. In fact, there are a few buts; we'll come to them later. Let's first enjoy the glow of actually liking a version of *FIFA* for the first time in years.

CHUNKY THIGHS

The first thing to notice is how damn good-looking it is. Have a gander at that huge annotated screenshot on the left. Nice, isn't it? But it's not just the screen estate that's had an overhaul—the player animations are fantastic as well, with every twist and turn modelled to perfection.

To help *FIFA* virgins, there's a choice of simulation or arcade mode. But this shouldn't really concern you too much. Why? Because if you want to buy *FIFA Football 2003* just for the arcade mode—which is faster and has fewer rules—you might as well close this magazine now and walk away. It's not a monstrosity by any means, but it is pointless. So having sensibly opted for that simulation mode, you can now pick to play friendlies, championships, and so on; many based on a licensed competition—especially the array of leagues from around the world.

And it's not just the tournaments that are official. As ever, EA has put a lot of work into securing every licence it can get its hands on, from players to managers to badges to stadiums. It shouldn't really matter, but it *is* satisfying in the way that driving a brand new car is always more enjoyable than tootling along behind the wheel of a year-old one. There's also the undeniable thrill—and it's the

PLAYER ANIMATIONS ARE FANTASTIC, WITH EVERY TWIST AND TURN MODELLED TO PERFECTION

QUICK START

What? This is your first *FIFA* game? Where have you been? This won't take a second...

GET POSSESSION First off, get the hang of tackling. You can use X for sliding tackles, but you'll find B more useful. Hold it down and then hit RT to sprint close up to your target—you'll stick out a pin and take the ball off 'em just like that. Easy, non?

KEEP POSSESSION Press A and the ball heads off in the direction you're facing. It's easy to misplace passes, though, so try and keep them short. Use X for long passes.

SCORE ONE MORE... Shoot using B. As you prepare to strike, a power bar flashes up, but you won't need it. Don't hit it too hard and try to deliver the shot at an angle.

FIFA FOOTBALL 2003

sort of thing that makes footie management games surprisingly enjoyable—at playing through a season the right way and altering it so the outcome is exactly how you want it to be. The age-old management option of being able to buy and sell players also helps here as, cash permitting, you can quickly build up your side into a world beater. Although it's limited as a management tool, this acquisition aspect adds depth and an addictive pull to single-player games.

BEND IT!

XGAMER SHOOT TO KILL

Unlike previous versions of the game, shooting in *FIFA 2003* is not simply a case of blasting the ball at a startled 'keeper at close range. You can now aim for the corners, applying deft curve. Choice!

FLUID EXCHANGE

But at the end of the day, Brian, it's the gameplay wot counts, and here EA has changed things for the better. *World Cup 2002* used the open passing system and came with all sorts of horrible added extras—abominations like keepy-uppies and star players. But it was always a bit mechanical. Thankfully, most of this has been dumped for *2003*. The passing is a lot less forced now, with your passes going pretty much to feet if you hit it in the right direction. The free passing system has also—rather cleverly—become a through-ball option (using Y). This is a far better way of doing things and makes for a much more fluid, playable match.

YOU NEVER GET THE SENSE —AS YOU REALLY SHOULD— THAT EACH GOAL IS UNIQUE

But while short passing and through-balls have become something of a joy to play, shooting and long passing remain troublesome. Scoring is still a question of hitting the ball just hard enough and at the right angle (having just changed your angle, remember); indeed, in many ways, the system has barely changed over the last ten years. You never get a sense—as you really should—that each goal is unique. In *FIFA*, one goal is pretty much like any other. The long passing suffers similar problems: results can be erratic, with strange looping balls a common occurrence.

ANGLE OF ATTACK

The camera angles don't help here—you never feel part of the game. Which is really off-putting and always keeps you at an awkward distance from the action.

These buts do add up and prevent *FIFA Football 2003* from being everything it could be. And that's a pity, because EA has got really close this time. Still, this is easily the best footie game on Xbox and a whole bundle of fun to boot. Just don't expect to find football recreated at your fingertips. As with *FIFA*s of old, this is a videogame first and foremost and, as such, succeeds gloriously. Welcome home, *FIFA*. We missed you. Sort of. **Richard Keith**

GOING FOR GOAL

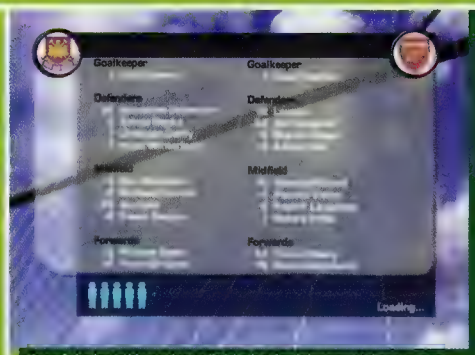
RED CARD
7/10, XGAMER 05
Lacks depth, but the 'no rules' gameplay is an absolute winner.

ISS 2
7/10, XGAMER 04
A pale imitation of sister title *Pro Evolution Soccer* available on other formats. Tsk.

2002 FIFA WORLD CUP
6/10, XGAMER 04
Lots of bells and whistles, but precious little to keep you glued to the screen.

DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER
4/10, XGAMER 04
Cheap and lacking in skill. Nothing like the boy Becks.

CAMERA OBSCURA



One of the best things about *FIFA* is that in club competitions you can buy and sell players to immediately improve your team.

SHOOT ON SIGHT

FIFA's always been about scoring goals, but while *2003* is a much more realistic experience, it's still far too easy to score.

Break away from the pack and, just before shooting, change direction, then power up about two-thirds of the way to send the ball in every time.

You can score goals with a little more finesse, as with this delicate little toe poke, but such moments are about as frequent as a Scotland victory.

But, it has to be said, the better you get, the more you'll find yourself scoring crackers, like this beauty from Shearer.

RATED FIFA FOOTBALL 2003

Graphics	Smooth 'n' lovely, with some great animations.	Gameplay	Fast, furious and fun, but not exactly football
Accessibility	Got that ol' *FIFA* pick up 'n' play thing just right.	Depth	Various championships take an age to finish.

8

XGAMER VERDICT **A huge improvement, and easily the best footie game on Xbox.**

Reviewer's hi-score > **West Ham 7 Man Utd 0 at Old Trafford.**

KONAMI

XBOX

Fatally stabbed in broad daylight, you should be heading towards the afterlife. But this is the beginning, not the end. Offered a second chance, you must travel through time to prevent countless attempts on your life. Track back to the middle ages, the turn of the century or thirty years ago to solve the mystery of your own death. Just don't become a corpse for the second time.

Shadow of Memories

www.konami-europe.com / www.konamistyle-europe.com

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IMPORT ONLY

TIGER WOODS PGA TOUR 2003

That's neat, that's neat, that's neat, that's neat. We really love your Tiger feet.

SPEEDY!
XGAMER SUPER SPRINT
If golf's just too relaxed for you, try out the speed golf mode, a race to get your ball in the hole first. We always knew golf was a good walk ruined; now they've ruined cross-country running. Hurrah!

On sale (US)
Now

On sale (UK)
Friday 6 December

game

- **US price** $49.95
- **Import price** £64.99
- **Genre** Golf
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Memory unit
- **Version** NTSC

company

- **Developer** EA
- **Publisher** EA
- **Contact** 0870 243 2435 www.ea.com

Okay. Hands up all of you who've fallen for this whole "Golf plus Tiger Woods equals Cool" scam? Anyone? Because, as far as I can see, Tiger's about as 'street' as Carlton out of *The Fresh Price Of Bel Air*, and the only 'house' he's 'in' would be the clubhouse, which is the sort of place you'll find my 80-year-old grandfather on a Monday afternoon.

EA doesn't seem to realise this. It's swallowed the whole Tiger Wood myth and created something that looks like *GOLF–THE MOVIE*, as directed by the Wachowski Brothers from a script by Peter Allis' daft uncle. A hard whack can earn you a bullet-time swoop around your player, or a set of split-screen freeze frames, accompanied by an almighty BANG! as your ball takes flight. Plus the commentator going, "Ooh, I say!" The effect's like Graham Crowden reading *Snow Crash* on *Jackanory*. On drugs. In the future.

You even get the "ba-dum, ba-dum, *ba-dum*" heartbeat effect from other EA Sports titles when you're faced with a crunch shot. Which is *really* helpful when you're still getting to grips with the new and improved control method...

SWINGERS Ah yes. The analogue stick-based ball hitting. You pull back for backswing, then jab the thing forward for the stroke. It's a little odd, especially once you bring draw and fade into the equation and start having to use the diagonals, then layer on repeated hammering of ○ and ● to add power or spin to the ball. But give it a chance and it works well.

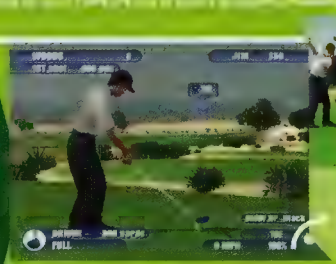
Other things don't sit quite so nicely–lining up a putt can be a nightmare, for instance, despite caddy advice on how to do it. There's a vagueness to it that all too often results in missed shots. Fair enough, possibly; it's not a science, after all.

Lovely structure, though. Plenty of game styles and players, with some good scenario modes. And the characters are well-made (even if Tiger can look a bit like an evil ventriloquist's dummy), although the courses don't look as good. *Halo* has better grass.

With *Outlaw Golf* the only competition (and unavailable here for now), *Tiger 2003* is by default the must-have Xbox golf game. Luckily, it's genuinely worth adding to your collection. **Jim McCauley**

TEE TIME

If real golf looked like this, then we'd all be crowded round our tellies come the Open, and Peter Allis would be a megastar. Which would probably be a good thing.



1

2

4

3

RATED TIGER WOODS 2003

New and improved golf that plays jolly well. Bizarre Hollywood effects, for sure, but it still proudly wears its Pringle jumper. 8

Reviewer's hi-score > **Sank a pint in one at the 19th in under a minute.**

IMPORT ONLY

PETIT COPTER

Take note, Mike Smith and Noel Edmunds. Choppers can be fun.

- **On Sale (Japan)** Now
- **On Sale (UK)** Not planned

game

- **US Price** ¥6,800
- **UK Import Price** £63.99
- **Genre** Flight sim
- **Players** 1
- **Supports** Nothing
- **Version** NTSC-J
- **Movies** None

company

- **Developers** Aqua System
- **Publisher** Aqua System
- **Contact** www.aquasystem.co.jp

Never accept a charity helicopter ride from a celebrity: it's one rule of thumb a parent should expressly pass on to the next generation. Because fame and airborne technology just don't mix. It's why games like *Petit Copter* are a necessity. It's cheaper than a flying lesson and much less likely to end in disaster.

But *Petit Copter* isn't just a shallow distraction. It's actually the best non-PC helicopter simulation ever. The idea is simple: pilot remote control choppers around a traditional Japanese home, picking up star symbols to gain access to new areas. And that's it. But then it's this simplicity which gives *Petit Copter* its unique charm. The handling is magnificent—you really feel as if you're at the controls of a toy helicopter.

My only real gripe is that it's too short. It'll probably only take you an afternoon to complete adventure mode, and another couple of hours to polish off the mini-missions in challenge mode. That's the only reason we give it such a low mark. Hopefully, Aqua Systems will bring out a sequel next year that'll build on this impressive debut. **Mark Walbank**

RATED PETIT COPTER

Sublime handling—and cuter than a Beanie Baby Britney—but it's all over in an afternoon, unfortunately. **6**

"Star! That's what they call you..." Pick up enough and you gain access to new game areas.

Well, slap my ass and call me Sally—this game is as purty as a pig roast on Sunday.

NASCAR THUNDER 2003

IMPORT ONLY

Bang, crash, wallop. More four-wheel fender-bending with knobs on.

- **On Sale (US)** Now
- **On Sale (UK)** Not likely

game

- **US Price** $49.99
- **UK Import Price** £63.99
- **Genre** Oval Racing
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Memory unit, Dolby Digital
- **Version** NTSC
- **Movies** None

company

- **Developer** Tiburon
- **Publisher** EA
- **Contact** 0870 243 2435 www.easports.com

From the first few notes of Steppenwolf's "Magic Carpet Ride" to a victory lap in the meaty career mode, *NASCAR Thunder's* racing is unmatched on any console. Period. EA Sports has taken last year's racing game and thrown in a host of new additions, including faster frame rates, better visuals, smarter AI, seven new tracks, a comprehensive tutorial mode and the hugely enjoyable Lightning Challenge.

In this mode, players must accept close to three dozen challenges, including recreating moments from real races. One of the first missions is to drive as Dale Earnhardt Jr—the cover boy and consultant for the game—during the 2001 EA Sports 500 race at Talladega Super Speedway. Just like last October's nail-biting race, there's just one lap to go and Earnhardt Jr. must get in front and win.

As an added bonus, each challenge kicks off with a chat by the actual NASCAR driver involved, complemented by some superb MRN (Motor Racing Network) radio recordings from the event.

And what EA Sports game would be complete without a collectible mini-game? You can earn over 100 Thunder Plates during play, which unlocks new drivers, cars, tracks, video footage and more.

The only major beef with *NASCAR Thunder 2003* is the lack of online support; again, players will have to fork out for this separately... **Marc Saltzman**

RATED NASCAR THUNDER

For fans of America's fastest-growing spectator sport, *NASCAR Thunder 2003* is a must-have addition to your Xbox collection. **8**

IMPORT ONLY

SEGA SPORTS NFL 2K3

Sega Sports' latest iteration of its pro footie series runs *Madden* into touch.

- **On Sale (US)** Now
- **On Sale (UK)** Not likely

game
- **US Price** $49.95
- **UK Import Price** £63.99
- **Genre** American football
- **Players** 1-2
- **Supports** Memory unit, Xbox Live
- **Version** NTSC
- **Movies** www.segasports.com

company
- **Developer** Visual Concepts
- **Publisher** Sega
- **Contact** www.segasports.com

Padded up to the hilt, *NFL 2K3* rivals the latest *Madden* game in almost every way–from the plethora of options to the deep franchise mode to the intuitive interface to the player animations.

That, and the game is forward-compatible so it'll support online play when Xbox Live goes, er, live, this November. Part of this Internet experience is the optional Sega Sports challenge mode, where players can track stats in a handful of areas and compete for a spot on the world's biggest high-score board. Also new to the series is the ESPN licence, which enhances the presentation with familiar faces.

But more important than the visual spit 'n' polish–the players, weather effects and crowds really are second to none–are the advancements in gameplay. Realistic AI for CPU players, thousands of real plays to choose from or the ability to create your own, an incredibly deep and multi-faceted Franchise mode... the list of improvements goes on and on.

So here's the bottom line: NFL fanatics looking for a deep, fun and accessible Xbox game must consider *NFL 2K3* alongside or–dare we say it?–instead of *Madden 2003*. 'Nuff said. **Marc Saltzman**

RATED **NFL 2K3**

Easily one of–if not–*the* best pro football game for the Xbox, giving *Madden* a helluva run for its money. 9

A football game so fun and well-rounded, it may knock *Madden* off its perch once and for all.

Big 'n' bulky, the players in *NFL Fever 2003* are a little on the meaty side (but don't tell 'em we said so).

NFL FEVER 2003

IMPORT ONLY

EA and Sega outclass Mr Gates' burly boys with superior ball-handling.

- **On Sale (US)** Now
- **On Sale (UK)** No plans

game
- **US Price** $49.95
- **UK Import Price** £63.99
- **Genre** Guess what?
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Memory unit, Xbox Live
- **Version** NTSC
- **Movies** www.xbox.com/nflfever2003

company
- **Developer** Microsoft
- **Publisher** Microsoft
- **Contact** www.xbox.com

The only thing worse than coughing up cash each year to buy a sports game sequel is when it isn't much of an improvement over its predecessor. Such is the case with Microsoft's *NFL Fever 2003*, a competent outing, but it hardly compares to EA Sports' or Sega Sports' respective football titles.

The most substantial difference is in the online gaming support–but without the Xbox Live service up and running just yet, we're left with a moderately improved offline game with a few new tricks.

One of which is a tweaked management mode, where players can build and take better control of a team for up to 25 seasons, sign free agents and draft, trade and cut players from the team during the off-season. The new Dynamic Player Performance feature helps track player stats and growth from game to game via a handy performance chart.

Novice players can always opt for *2003*'s training mode, with drills and activities to familiarise players with the tactics required during the other modes, such as passing and tackling.

Gameplay resembles last year's version more-or-less, but with a slightly improved running game–though a few annoying AI issues persist. In particular, the computer-controlled defencemen seem to appear out of nowhere to squash a well-planned offensive. A few other minor beefs: the player animations repeat too often and the commentary isn't always accurate.

Despite these quibbles, *NFL Fever 2003* is a good–but not great–solo or two-player diversion that should blossom on Xbox Live. **Marc Saltzman**

RATED **NFL FEVER 2003**

A capable–if not too different–second outing on the Xbox, but it doesn't hold a candle to the likes of *Madden* or *NFL 2K3*. 7

NFL BLITZ 20-03

IMPORT ONLY

Pah, who needs all that griddery-pokery? Gi' us helmet-mashing.

- **On Sale (US)** Now
- **On Sale (UK)** No, worst luck.

game

- **US Price** $49.95
- **UK Import Price** £63.99
- **Genre** They're coming out the goddam walls!
- **Players** 1-4
- **Supports** Dual shock, memory card
- **Version** NTSC
- **Movies** www.midway.com

company

- **Developer** Midway
- **Publisher** Midway
- **Contact** www.midway.com

Pigskin patriots who prefer arcade action over an authentic simulation need not look any further than Midway's over-the-top *NFL Blitz 20-03*. Consider it a polished version of last year's 8-on-8 player game (**XGamer** 03 8/10), with a few gameplay tweaks and new player animations.

The most welcome addition is the Create-A-Player feature, which enables you to customise your players' appearances, performance attributes and equipment from scratch. There's also a few silly options, such as the ability to create a cowboy, ape, hotdog man, and the like.

Aside from humorous new tackles and end-zone celebration animations, the visuals are about on par with last year's iteration, although now there are TV-style replays. The game load times are quicker, too. Despite these new touches and an updated team roster (including the new Houston Texans), it's tough to justify this new purchase for *NFL Blitz 20-02* owners. Sure, it's a more refined version of the game, but Midway must give gamers more of an incentive if they want 'em to fork out for each yearly update. **Marc Saltzman**

RATED NFL BLITZ 20-03

The best home adaptation of the celebrated extreme football series to date–but not much different to *NFL Blitz 20-02*. 8

The *Blitz* is back–Midway's beat-'em-up sports game returns to the Xbox for a second outing.

IMPORT CHANNEL

XGamer bags its American and Japanese imports from TQ Games

Contact 08707 454840 **Website** www.tqgames.co.uk

You've probably heard about importing or you know somebody who's done it, so what's it all about? And what do you need to get started? Be warned, it's no small step to take...

WHAT YOU NEED

Have you got the set-up to run a Japanese or US console? Unless you're planning to blow it up, you'll need a reliable stepdown transformer to provide the power supply of 110V at a decent wattage (200-300 watts).

Then, to get a picture, you'll need a TV that accommodates an NTSC signal, specifically 'nice' NTSC 3.58 (not bad NTSC 4.43). Check the manual, not just the sockets. Does it support composite video, S-Video, SCART or component RGB? True RGB SCART cables are available for Xbox and can arguably deliver a better picture than the lead that comes with it.

WHERE TO BUY

You'll find grey importers advertising in the classified sections of games magazines, or you can try searching online. But most transactions will be done by phone or Net. Look out for recommendations from previous customers and ask in games forums for their track record.

HOW TO BUY

Some UK importers have a habit of charging more than others. But with a UK importer you can check to see if they have the goods in stock. Foreign exporters can take a long time to deliver to the UK.

WHY IMPORT?

Not all games get a simultaneous release, and us Europeans are usually the ones who are made to wait. Sometimes forever. A few US and Japanese titles never get released here at all.

The problem with buying games on import is compatibility. Xbox game code contains a territorial lock-out dividing the world into NTSC (USA), NTSC-J (Japan) and PAL regions (the rest of the world).

WHAT MAKES THE WORLD GO AROUND

There is no such thing as a manufacturer's warranty when you import. If something goes wrong, then there's little you can do about it. This is not a hobby to get into unless you can afford it, and any advantage of shopping outside rip-off Blighty will be countered by shipping, import tax and the Spong Levy (a special mark-up thrown in for early adopters).

WAKARIMASU KA?

Every importer can tell you of a customer who bought a Japanese game and was shocked to find they couldn't understand a word of it...

ENTRY DENIED USA & JAPAN RELEASE ONLY	
XBOX LIVE US release is 15 Nov	
DYNASTY WARRIORS 3 Real-time strategy slugger	
NFL BLITZ 20-03 Our fave US footie game	
NFL FEVER 2003 Xbox Live launch game	
JOCKEY'S ROAD Horse racing sim	
MAXIMUM CHASE Hi-speed cops vs robbers	
FLIGHT ACADEMY Be an airline pilot	
BRAVE KNIGHT Classic Japanese love sim	

ENTRY GRANTED WELCOME TO THE UK	
TERMINATOR Judgement Day cometh	OCT
SEGA SOCCER SLAM The 'toons do football	OCT
MYST III The OAP of adventures	OCT
OUTLAW GOLF TDK bring it to Blighty	NOV
DEAD TO RIGHTS Brillo *Max Payne* killer	NOV
SEGA GT 2002 Xbox's answer to *GT3*	NOV
TOCA RACE DRIVER Exciting pack racing	DEC
STEEL BATTALION Monster mech shooter	DEC

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ALERT! WEALTH HAZARD WARNING

XGamer writes dreamy reviews so you don't have gaming nightmares.

GAME NAME	SCORE	WHERE'S
4X4 EVO2	**7/10**	"Despite a small mud pile of flaws, this off-road sim has enough depth for racing fans to climb behind the wheel." ⊠**Racing** ⊠**Take 2** ⊠**Review** XGamer 05 ⊠**Tips** XG 07–tips book
AGGRESSIVE INLINE	**8/10**	"A complicated but rewarding 'see-it-skate-it' game." ⊠**Rollerblading** ⊠**Acclaim** ⊠**Review** XGamer 08 ⊠**Tips** XG 09–cheats
ALL-STAR BASEBALL 2003	**6/10**	"The tempo of this game reminds me of wandering endlessly in an RPG looking for that elusive fourth elemental amulet." ⊠**Baseball** ⊠**Acclaim** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book; XG 09–cheats
AMPED: FREESTYLE SNOWBOARDING	**8/10**	"Turns skidding down hill on a plank into an unmissable experience." ⊠**Snowboarding** ⊠**Microsoft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 01 ⊠**Tips** XG 01–tip and cheat; XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
ANTZ EXTREME RACING	**4/10**	"Utterly tedious and feckless racer, stapled cruelly to a missed-the-boat licence. Buy and cry." ⊠**Racing** ⊠**Empire** ⊠**Review** XGamer 08
ARCTIC THUNDER	**5/10**	"Big initial thrills soon peter out. *Arctic Thunder* is a distinctly average and shallow racer." ⊠**Arcade racing** ⊠**Midway** ⊠**Review** XGamer 01 ⊠**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
AZURIK: RISE OF PERATHIA	**4/10**	"*Azurik* is now the benchmark for all arcade adventure games wanting to surpass the blatantly average post. Ignore." ⊠**Arcade adventure** ⊠**Microsoft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 02 ⊠**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE 9/10

BUY!

BARBARIAN	**3/10**	"Mediocre barbarian-ing and the most cringesome scripts since *Last Of The Summer Wine*. If you see it, leg it. Sharpish." ⊠**Beat-'em-up** ⊠**Virgin** ⊠**Review** XGamer 09
BATMAN VENGEANCE	**5/10**	"The coders should've been hunted down by the real Batman and banged up mid-development for crimes against games." ⊠**Arcade adventure** ⊠**Ubi Soft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 02 ⊠**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
BLADE 2	**6/10**	"It's not gonna change the world and it's by no means an essential buy, but still fun and addictive." ⊠**Beat-'em-up** ⊠**Activision** ⊠**Review** XGamer 09
BLOOD OMEN 2: LEGACY OF KAIN	**6/10**	"Even without the iffy combat, this is a fairly anaemic experience." ⊠**3D platform** ⊠**Eidos** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book; XG 08–tip
BLOODWAKE	**6/10**	"Not the most earth-shattering game, but technically accomplished and fun. Just tackle it in limited doses, that's all." ⊠**Shoot-'em-up** ⊠**Microsoft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 02 ⊠**Tips** XG 02–cheat; XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–cheats; XG 07–tips book
BRUCE LEE: QUEST OF THE DRAGON	**3/10**	"Lazy, unimaginative tedious, and frustrating–in that order." ⊠**Beat-'em -up** ⊠**Vivendi** ⊠**Review** XGamer 08
BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER	**6/10**	"A sound but yawnsome affair. Fans will be coffin into their tea." ⊠**Action-adventure** ⊠**EA** ⊠**Review** XGamer 06 ⊠**Tips** XG 07–tips guide and maps; XG 08–xpert tips
BURNOUT	**7/10**	"Exhilarating racer marred by repetitive replays." ⊠**Arcade racer** ⊠**Acclaim** ⊠**Review** XGamer 04 ⊠**Tips** XG 07–tips book
CEL DAMAGE	**3/10**	"When a game is this annoying, it simply cannot be good. And this game is hugely annoying..." ⊠**Vehicle combat** ⊠**Electronic Arts** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book

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COMPLAINTS

GAME NAME	SCORE	VERDICT

CHAMP MANAGER SEASON 01/02

8/10

BUY!

CHASE	**6/10**	"Like your first moped—there are thrills and spills aplenty, but it won't last. You'll get a good few wheelies' worth though." ⊠**Stunt racing** ⊠**Bam** ⊠**Review** XGamer 09
CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS	**6/10**	"They say Rome wasn't built in a day, so perhaps a sequel will address these nagging shortcomings. It's so nearly great." ⊠**Racing** ⊠**Encore** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 03—cheat book; XG 07—tips book; XG 08—tips
COMMANDOS 2: MEN OF COURAGE	**8/10**	"An underwhelming conversion can't quite obscure its brilliance." ⊠**Real-time strategy** ⊠**Eidos** ⊠**Review** XGamer 07 ⊠**Tips** XG 07—tips; XG 08—tips book
CONFLICT: DESERT STORM	**8/10**	"More fun in the sand than wrestling with naked Saharan belly-dancers." ⊠**Squad-shooter** ⊠**SCi** ⊠**Review** XGamer 08 ⊠**Tips** XG 09—walkthrough
CRASH	**8/10**	"A big leap forward for crashing games. Get the cash, go buy *Crash*." ⊠**Vehicle combat** ⊠**Rage** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 06—cheats; XG 07—tips book
CRASH BANDICOOT: THE WRATH OF CORTEX	**5/10**	"Too crusty, too old school. The Xbox is capable of much, much more." ⊠**Platformer** ⊠**Vivendi Universal** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 06—tips; XG 07—tips book
CRAZY TAXI 3: HIGH ROLLER	**6/10**	"Burns off at the lights, then runs out of fuel near Clapham. Pity." ⊠**Driving** ⊠**Sega** ⊠**Review** XGamer 09 ⊠**Tips** XG 09—cheats
DARK SUMMIT	**5/10**	"*Dark Summit* starts out with noble intentions, but it's downhill (slowly) for the rest of the way." ⊠**Snowboarding** ⊠**THQ** ⊠**Review** XGamer 02 ⊠**Tips** XG 03—cheat book; XG 07—tips book
DAVE MIRRA: FREESTYLE BMX 2	**5/10**	"Whether you dig extreme sports or not buy *Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 3* instead. If you can afford both, just buy *Tony Hawk's*." ⊠**BMX** ⊠**Acclaim** ⊠**Review** XGamer 02 ⊠**Tips** XG 02—cheat; XG 03—cheat book; XG 05—tips bible; XG 07—tips book
DAVID BECKHAM SOCCER	**4/10**	"Plays like a rotting mackerel. Beckham has signed up for the Grimsby Town of football games." ⊠**Football** ⊠**Rage** ⊠**Review** XGamer 04 ⊠**Tips** XG 05—guide; XG 07—tips book

DEAD OR ALIEN 3

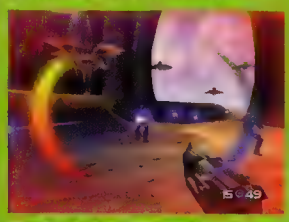
BUY!

DEADLY SKIES	**4/10**	"Decent looking, but ultimately unfulfilling arcade combat sim. There's no need to shell out on the Xbox flight stick yet." ⊠**Arcade flight combat** ⊠**Konami** ⊠**Review** XGamer 01
DEATHROW	**6/10**	"Fast, frenetic fun—for a limited period only. If you don't like extreme sporting violence then stay away..." ⊠**Future sports** ⊠**Ubi Soft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 09
DRAGON'S LAIR II: TIMEWARP IMPORT ONLY	**0/10**	"Take a dump and stick it in your mouth, that's *Dragon's Lair II* (only you'd still have £40 to buy some mouthwash)." ⊠**Interactive movie** ⊠**Digital Leisure** ⊠**Review** XGamer 05
ELDER SCROLLS III: MORROWIND	**6/10**	"Balancing highs and lows, *Morrowind* is big, bold and full of holes." ⊠**RPG** ⊠**Ubi Soft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 07 ⊠**Tips** XG 08—tips
ENCLAVE	**5/10**	"Well done, it looks super. Now go back and put a game in there." ⊠**Third-person slasher** ⊠**Swing** ⊠**Review** XGamer 07
ESPN INTERNATIONAL WINTER SPORTS 2002	**2/10**	"Only slightly less tedious than watching a granite block sliding at knuckle-bitingly slow speed along a sheet of ice." ⊠**Winter Olympics** ⊠**Konami** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 07—tips book
ESPN WINTER X GAMES SNOWBOARDING 2002	**4/10**	"Frustrating in the extreme. There's no need to subject yourself to this when the likes of *Amped* grace the shelves." ⊠**Snowboarding** ⊠**Konami** ⊠**Review** XGamer 04
F1 2002	**6/10**	"The usual Formula One 'game'—but on the Xbox." ⊠**Racing** ⊠**EA** ⊠**Review** XGamer 03 ⊠**Tips** XG 03—cheat book; XG 07—tips book
FIFA WORLD CUP, 2002	**6/10**	"Quite a spectacle, but the shallow gameplay is unfulfilling." ⊠**Football** ⊠**Electronic Arts** ⊠**Review** XGamer 04 ⊠**Tips** XG 04—tip; XG 05—guide; XG 07—tips book
FUZION FRENZY	**6/10**	"Stacks of games in one and fun in bursts, but lacks the invention or character to hold your attention for long." ⊠**Mini-game compendium** ⊠**Microsoft** ⊠**Review** XGamer 01 ⊠**Tips** XG 01—cheat; XG 03—cheat book; XG 07—tips book
GAUNTLET: DARK LEGACY	**2/10**	"*Gauntlet: Dark Legacy* is duller than a blow to the head with a frozen turkey. And just as painful." ⊠**Action adventure** ⊠**Midway** ⊠**Review** XGamer 04 ⊠**Tips** XG 05—tips bible; XG 07—tips book

GAME NAME	SCORE	VERDICT
GENMA ONIMUSHA	**8/10**	"Brutal, compelling and shockingly fun. Shame it's over so quickly." ◘**Samurival horror** ◘**Capcom** ◘**Review** XGamer 04 ◘**Tips** XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book; XG 09–cheats
GRAVITY GAMES BIKE: STREET.VERT.DIRT.	**0/10**	"Trotters Independent Traders slivering BMX evil. If you buy it, grab a razor blade while you're at it for a sharp exit." ◘**BMX** ◘**Midway** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
GUN METAL	**5/10**	"A entirely average shooter that's buried some good ideas in a sludge of misfiring mediocrity." ◘**Shoot-'em-up** ◘**Rage** ◘**Review** XGamer 05
GUN VALKYRIE	**6/10**	"It starts out feeling like The Perfect Game–then falls from grace..." ◘**Shoot-'em-up** ◘**Sega** ◘**Review** XGamer 03 ◘**Tips** XG 04–tip; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
HALO	**9/10**	BUY!
HITMAN 2: SILENT ASSASSIN	**6/10**	"An excellent idea, let down by sheer brutality. Taste the pain." ◘**Stealth-shooter** ◘**Eidos** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
HUNTER THE RECKONING	**3/10**	"More repetitive and dated than a long line of evenly placed dates. Go hunting for action elsewhere." ◘**Slash-'em-up** ◘**Virgin** ◘**Review** XGamer 06 ◘**Tips** XG 07–tips book
ISS2	**7/10**	"Not stunning but certainly the best Xbox football game so far." ◘**Football** ◘**Konami** ◘**Review** XGamer 04 ◘**Tips** XG 05–guide and cheats; XG 06–cheat; XG 07–tips book
JAMES BOND 007 IN... AGENT UNDER FIRE	**6/10**	"Very Bondesque, but you won't be attempting re-entry." ◘**First-person shooter** ◘**Electronic Arts** ◘**Review** XGamer 04 ◘**Tips** XG 07–tips; XG 07–tips book
JET SET RADIO FUTURE	**9/10**	"Surpasses even the original for sheer style and playability. Remarkable." ◘**Combat skating** ◘**Sega** ◘**Review** XGamer 02 ◘**Tips** XG 02–tip; XG 03–cheat book; XG 04–tip; XG 05/07–tips book
KABUKI WARRIORS IMPORT ONLY	**3/10**	"Tedious scrapper that raises not a blip on the heart monitor. Do not attempt to play this at home." ◘**Beat-'em-up** ◘**Crave** ◘**Review** XGamer 01 ◘**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible
KELLY SLATER'S PRO SURFER	**8/10**	"Hang a sign on your door which says 'gone surfing', and get tore in. This is the new smooth." ◘**Surfing** ◘**Activision** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
KNOCKOUT KINGS 2002	**6/10**	"It might please the mainstream, but *Knockout Kings* will certainly leave fans of the series a touch cold." ◘**Boxing** ◘**Electronic Arts** ◘**Review** XGamer 02 ◘**Tips** XG 06–cheats; XG 07–tips book
LEGENDS OF WRESTLING	**5/10**	"Another mediocre wrestling game, one for fanatics only." ◘**Wrestling** ◘**Acclaim** ◘**Review** XGamer 06 ◘**Tips** XG 07–cheats; XG 07–tips book; XG 08–tips
LOONS	**5/10**	"Bright, colourful and amusing comedy beat-'em-up that'll amuse wee-er urchins, but not what you bought an Xbox for." ◘**Cartoon combat** ◘**Infogrames** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
MAD DASH RACING	**6/10**	"Slick-as-you-like speed thrills but comedy bananas and a flatulent warthog called Chops do not a lasting race game make." ◘**Foot-based comedy racer** ◘**Eidos** ◘**Review** XGamer 02 ◘**Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–cheat; XG 07–tips book
MADDEN NFL 2003	**8/10**	"Despite the ever-expanding competition, *Madden* is still the American football game to beat." ◘**American footie** ◘**Electronic Arts** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2	**7/10**	"A decent enough BMXer that would do well if it wasn't languishing in the shadow of Tony Hawk's monolith." ◘**BMX** ◘**Activision** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
MAX PAYNE	**9/10**	BUY!
MIKE TYSON HEAVYWEIGHT BOXING	**7/10**	"A fun 'n' frantic slugger without the stamina to keep it off the ropes." ◘**Beat-'em-up** ◘**Codemasters** ◘**Review** XGamer 05 ◘**Tips** XG 07–tips
MOTO GP URT	**8/10**	"The best bike racing game around, perfect for novices and pros alike." ◘**Motorbike racing** ◘**THQ** ◘**Review** XGamer 05 ◘**Tips** XG 06–cornering guide; XG 07–tips book
MURAKUMO IMPORT ONLY	**5/10**	"Fast, furious but also far too frustrating at times, and lacks a genuinely appealing long term challenge." ◘**Shoot-'em-up** ◘**From Software** ◘**Review** XGamer 09
MX2002	**4/10**	"An arcadey experience, but it lacks any of the depth, finesse and audio-visual splendour that Xbox gamers demand." ◘**Moto X** ◘**THQ** ◘**Review** XGamer 04 ◘**Tips** XG 07–tips book

XGAMER RECOMMENDS

Everyone's got their favourite so now's the time to let the other lovely games get a look in



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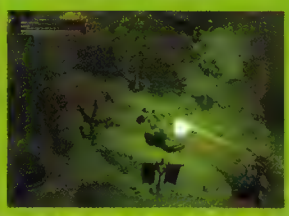

BALDUR'S GATE: DARK ALLIANCE

QUANTUM REDSHIFT

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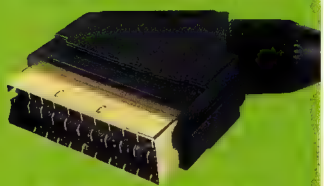

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Not all tellys are created equal. With differing build qualities, some S-Video connections are actually better than some RGB SCART sockets. Likewise, some SCART connections are really just SCART shaped composite sockets. If in doubt, check your TV's manual.

GAME NAME	SCORE	VERDICT
NASCAR HEAT 2002 IMPORT ONLY	**8/10**	"A bit too much like racing on a giant roundabout, but otherwise a decent upstanding member of the racing community." ◘ **Racing** ◘ **Infogrames** ◘ **Review** XGamer 03 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book
NASCAR THUNDER 2002 IMPORT ONLY	**7/10**	"Not Xbox's finest racer–*RalliSport Challenge* has that honour–but still more fun than a southern-fried can of whoop-ass." ◘ **Racing** ◘ **Electronic Arts** ◘ **Review** XGamer 03 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book
NBA 2K2 IMPORT ONLY	**8/10**	"*NBA Live 2002* has a more established name and *NBA Inside Drive* may be prettier, but *NBA 2K2* is the best." ◘ **Basketball** ◘ **Sega** ◘ **Review** XGamer 05
NBA INSIDE DRIVE 2002	**8/10**	"Everything you'd ever want in a basketball game: solid AI, ample dunks, controllable defenders and properly arcing jump shots." ◘ **Basketball** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 03 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book; XG 08–tip
NBA LIVE 2002	**2/10**	"Not even NBA fans will find any joy in this game. EA should have spent more money on the game instead of the licence." ◘ **Basketball** ◘ **Electronic Arts** ◘ **Review** XGamer 01◘ **Tips** XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
NEW LEGENDS	**3/10**	"*New Legends*? Old Dog-ends more like. If this is the future of fighting games, I'm taking up macramé" ◘ **Third-person slash-'em-up** ◘ **THQ** ◘ **Review** XGamer 05 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips book
NEZMIX IMPORT ONLY	**3/10**	"A charming idea gets caught in linearity and repetition. In essence–nice graphics; shame about the game." ◘ **Arcade adventure** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 03
NFL 2K2 IMPORT ONLY	**7/10**	"The easiest of the three American football titles to pick up, yet *NFL 2K2* is the most frustrating to master. And the name *is* daft." ◘ **American football** ◘ **Sega** ◘ **Review** XGamer 02
NFL BLITZ 20-02 IMPORT ONLY	**8/10**	"Still the best NFL game to go for if you're not an American footie fan–but just fancy hitting a few big blokes." ◘ **American football** ◘ **Midway** ◘ **Review** XGamer 03 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips book
NFL FEVER 2002 IMPORT ONLY	**7/10**	"Got lots of friends to play with? *NFL Fever* is easier to pick up and enjoy than *Madden*." ◘ **American football** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 01 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
NHL 2003	**8/10**	"Despite growing competition from the likes of Sega and Midway, EA's *NHL 2003* is still the ice hockey sim to beat." ◘ **Ice hockey** ◘ **Electronic Arts** ◘ **Review** XGamer 09
NHL HITZ 20-03	**7/10**	"Slamming arcade action, with loads of tweakable options. Won't last forever–but what does?" ◘ **Ice hockey** ◘ **Black Box** ◘ **Review** XGamer 09
NIGHTCASTER	**6/10**	"Decent enough. Incurable fantasy fans would be advised to try it. A more engaging storyline would have made it a seven out of ten." ◘ **Arcade adventure** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 02 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
ODDWORLD: MUNCH'S ODDYSEE	**7/10**	"Good-natured characterful puzzling, but it may repeat on you." ◘ **Arcade adventure** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 01 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 03–tip; XG 04/XG 07–tips book
OFF ROAD: WIDE OPEN	**1/10**	"Putting this into your Xbox would be more disrespectful than trying to ram raid Westminster Abbey in a Lada." ◘ **Off-road racer** ◘ **Infogrames** ◘ **Review** XGamer 02 ◘ **Tips** XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
OUTLAW GOLF IMPORT ONLY	**7/10**	"Ought to be terrible, but actually proves curiously enjoyable." ◘ **Golf** ◘ **Simon & Schuster** ◘ **Review** XGamer 07 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips book
PIRATES: LEGEND OF BLACK KAT	**5/10**	"A fantastically good-looking piece of software, with an utterly standard game attached. Classic software piracy." ◘ **Adventure** ◘ **Electronic Arts** ◘ **Review** XGamer 04 ◘ **Tips** XG 06–cheats; XG 07–tips book
PRISONER OF WAR	**7/10**	"High on heartrate-hiking tension, but lacking in thrills." ◘ **Stealth-adventure** ◘ **Codemasters** ◘ **Review** XGamer 06 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips; XG 08–camp guide
PRO TENNIS WTA TOUR	**2/10**	"Imagine winning a hot date with a top lady tennis player, then finding out it's Lyndsay Davenport. Exactly." ◘ **Tennis, then** ◘ **Konami** ◘ **Review** XGamer 08

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING

BUY!

QUANTUM REDSHIFT

9/10

BUY!

GAME NAME	SCORE	VERDICT
RALLISPORT CHALLENGE	**8/10**	"Despite the unofficial vibe, it holds its own. *Colin McRae 3*–it's your move." ◘ **Rallying** ◘ **Microsoft** ◘ **Review** XGamer 02 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips book
RED CARD	**7/10**	"Lack of depth means it won't last the full season but it's bloody good fun nonetheless." ◘ **Football** ◘ **Midway** ◘ **Review** XGamer 05 ◘ **Tips** XG 07–tips book

GAME NAME	SCORE	VERDICT
SHIKIGAMI NO SHIRO IMPORT ONLY	8/10	"Fast, fun, and pixel-perfect; proving that a lack of complexity doesn't stop a game from being great." ◘Shoot-'em-up ◘Media Works ◘Review XGamer 05
SHREK	4/10	"Boring and unrewarding platform pokery. Those without standards might like it. The rest... what do you reckon?" ◘Platform ◘TDK ◘Review XGamer 02 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
SILENT HILL 2 INNER FEARS	8/10	"Gamer-sensitive design with flourishes of horror and heaps of action and bodies. *Inner Fears* will terrify and thrill." ◘Survival horror ◘Konami ◘Review XGamer 09 ◘Tips XG 02–tip; XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
SIMPSONS ROAD RAGE, THE	4/10	"Take out *The Simpsons* and you've got a hollow mockery of a game. Wrapped in a vest." ◘Arcade driving ◘Electronic Arts ◘Review XGamer 01 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
SLAM TENNIS	7/10	"The Perfect Tennis Game? No, not quite, but it's the best game set and match so far. One to be recommended." ◘Tennis ◘Infogrames ◘Review XGamer 06
SMASHING DRIVE	3/10	"This simplistic, repetitive driving game is Namco's first Xbox game–let's hope they do better with the next one." ◘Racing ◘Namco ◘Review XGamer 05 ◘Tips XG 07–tips book
SPIDER-MAN	6/10	"A lazy average adaption. This isn't what you bought an Xbox for." ◘Action-adventure ◘Activision ◘Review XGamer 05 ◘Tips XG 05–cheat and tip; XG 06–cheats; XG 07–tips book
SPLASHDOWN	7/10	"Not the most fun you'll have on water, but wet 'n' wild enough." ◘Jetski racing ◘Infogrames ◘Review XGamer 08 ◘Tips XG 09–cheats
SPYHUNTER	7/10	"You'll greedily snort it up but the ensuing fun is short-lived." ◘Shoot-'em-up ◘Midway ◘Review XGamer 04 ◘Tips XG 05–tip; XG 07–tips book
SSX TRICKY	9/10	"The best thing with ice since Calypos. Get it, and feel good about life" ◘Snowboarding ◘EA ◘Review XGamer 05 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 06–course guide and maps; XG 07–tips book
STAR WARS: JEDI STARFIGHTER	7/10	"Decent shoot-'em-up but shorter life expectancy than a Stormtrooper." ◘Shoot-'em-up ◘LucasArts ◘Review XGamer 04 ◘Tips XG 07–tips book; XG 08–tips
STAR WARS: OBI-WAN	5/10	"Has its moments, but then so did *The Phantom Menace*." ◘Action adventure ◘LucasArts ◘Review XGamer 02 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
STAR WARS: STARFIGHTER S.E. IMPORT ONLY	6/10	"An uninspired port of an overrated PS2 game. Fun while it lasts." ◘Dogfighting shoot-'em-up ◘LucasArts ◘Review XGamer 01 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
STREET HOOPS	3/10	"A miserable attempt at game design, and further proof that joypad basketball is pants." ◘Basketball ◘Activision ◘Review XGamer 09
TD OVERDRIVE	2/10	"A heap of a racer, made with all the love and effort that a supermarket trolley boy shows for his four-wheeled charges." ◘Street racer ◘Infogrames ◘Review XGamer 04 ◘Tips XG 07–tips book
TETRIS WORLDS	4/10	"Compared to the original, *Tetris Worlds* is akin to scribbling a moustache on the Mona Lisa. In highlighter pens." ◘Puzzle ◘THQ ◘Review XGamer 08
THE THING	7/10	"*Silent Hill* with squad combat, snow and, oh, you know. Things." ◘Survival-horror ◘Vivendi Universal ◘Review XGamer 09

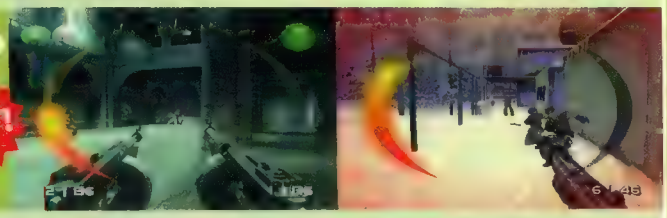
TIMESPLITTERS 2

9/10

"An instant classic with the best multiplayer mode of any console title."

◘ ◘

BUY!



TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 2X	7/10	"Tony looks great on the box, but *2x* is a step backwards for Hawk's veterans. Hang on for *Tony Hawk's 3*." ◘Skateboarding ◘Activision ◘Review XGamer 01 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book; XG 08–cheat
TONY HAWK'S PRO SKATER 3	8/10	"Criminally addictive, relentless thrills but not truly radical." ◘Skateboarding ◘Activision ◘Review XGamer 02 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 03/04–level guide; XG 05/07–tips book
TOUR DE FRANCE	4/10	"Uninspired cycle effort. Someone switched imagination to autopedal." ◘Bicycle racing ◘Konami ◘Review XGamer 07
TRANSWORLD SURF	7/10	"Bold, fun and well worth a gander. Nice to see an extreme sports game without a Roman numeral. Yet." ◘Surfing ◘Infogrames ◘Review XGamer 02 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
TRIPLE PLAY BASEBALL 2002 IMPORT ONLY	8/10	"EA hits a home run–but not a grand slam–with its latest offering. The best arcade-like baseball experience on Xbox." ◘Baseball ◘EA ◘Review XGamer 06 ◘Tips XG 07–tips book
TUROK EVOLUTION	7/10	"Huge, detailed, pretty and fun but expect to be frustrated at points." ◘First-person shooter ◘Acclaim ◘Review XGamer 08 ◘Tips XG 09–tips book
UFC: TAPOUT	3/10	"Messy, vacuous and oddly non-violent fighting that's as likely to grip you as Giant Haystacks is of making a career comeback." ◘Beat-'em-up ◘Ubi Soft ◘Review XGamer 03 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 07–tips book
WORLD SERIES BASEBALL IMPORT ONLY	8/10	"Undoubtedly Sega Sports' best effort yet–and almost the best baseball game for the Xbox. Almost. *Triple Play* still has the edge." ◘Baseball ◘Sega ◘Review XGamer 08
WRECKLESS: THE YAKUZA MISSIONS	6/10	"A fantastic demo of the Xbox graphics processor but not much else." ◘Driving ◘Activision ◘Review XGamer 02 ◘Tips XG 03–cheat book; XG 05–tips bible; XG 07–tips book
WWE RAW	3/10	"A lot more thought is needed to even get this to the level of playable. Poor in the extreme." ◘Wrestlin' ◘THQ ◘Review XGamer 09

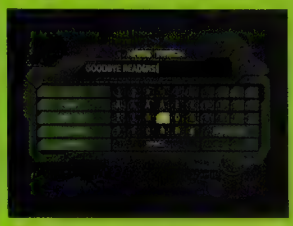
IMPORT ONLY

A handy list of dealers operating in the murky world of importing. Foreign games and accessories ahoy.

- **TQ GAMES** 0870 745 4840 www.tqgames.co.uk
- **ANOTHER WORLD** 01782 271 750 www.anotherworld.co.uk
- **CA GAMES** 0141 334 3901 www.cagames.co.uk
- **LIK-SANG** www.lik-sang.com
- **TRONIX** www.tronixweb.com
- **LAN-KWEI TRADING** www.lan-kwei.com
- **NCS** www.ncsx.com
- **GOBLIN GAMES** www.goblingames.co.uk or www.goblindirect.com

XGAMER EASTER EGGS

Tiny little Xbox [illegible]



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tackle

Dirtying our hands on pikey peripherals, so you only touch the classiest of controllers.

APPROVED

MAD CATZ MICROCON

From Mad Catz **Price** £19.99
On sale Now **Contact** www.madcatz.com

OVERVIEW
At last, someone's built a dinky pad. The Microcon really is a teeny little chap, and from the moment you rip the packaging off, it oozes a sense of solid quality. It's available in a variety of colours, and allows you to program button sequences.

ERGONOMICS
Perfectly comfy, with all buttons in easy reaching distance. The rubbery grips down the sides mean you concentrate less on gripping and more on control manipulation, which is welcome.

CONTROLS
Great. The buttons are firmly sprung and don't make those awful creaky sounds you get with cut-price pads. The classic four-point D-pad—a let down on most Xbox pads—is excellent, and if you fancy programming combos in, you can do so with the macro function.

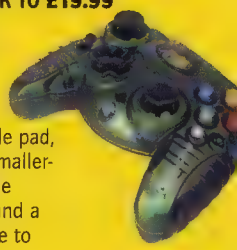
THE GAMEPLAY TEST
Flawless *Halo* action, although the analogue sticks seemed a little sensitive. We therefore ramped down the control sensitivity in the game. Job's a good 'un.

RATED A smashing little pad. If you really want an S-Controller but can't get your hands on one, this is the perfect substitute.

8

XGAMER RECOMMENDS

BEST UNOFFICIAL PAD
MAD CATZ MICROCON
8/10, XGAMER 10 £19.99
From Madcatz
On sale Now
Contact www.madcatz.com



A smashing little pad, better for the smaller-handed than the standard pad, and a good alternative to the Controller S.

BEST JOYSTICK
ARCADE STICK
9/10, XGAMER 03 £29.99
From Gamester
On sale Now
Contact 01922 503 133

No analogue stick functions maybe, but this stick'll see you right for loads of games—most notably *Dead Or Alive 3*.

BEST WHEEL
MAD CATZ MC2 WHEEL
8/10, XGAMER 07 £49.99
From Mad Catz
On sale Now
Contact www.madcatz.com

Hmm, seen this one somewhere before... It isn't cheap, but the MC2 wheel is the best Xbox wheel by far. Cheaper alternatives just can't cut it.

BEST GADGET
X JOYBOX CONVERTER
9/10, XGAMER 03 £6–25
From Importers
On sale Now
Contact: www.xbox-online.net/flash/xboxjoybox.html or www.anotherworld.co.uk

A fantastic gadget that enables you to plug PS2 joypads into your Xbox. A lot cheaper than buying new pads—but on import only.

NAKI G-SHOCK CONTROL PAD

From Naki **Price** £30 **On sale** Now
Contact www.nakiusa.com

OVERVIEW
This is a smaller pad than the beast that comes with the European Xbox. It has a smaller body than the original 'box-controllers, but larger handles that stick out like more traditional gaming pads. It's in keeping with the colour and materials design of the Xbox with some extra green to spice things up.

ERGONOMICS
The pad does feel good but requires you to hold it further up the body than perhaps the shape of the 'handles' suggests. These handles could simply have been a little smaller.

CONTROLS
These are generally responsive, precise and solid. The D-pad and button positions, and the finger-reach for the analogue sticks is all really good, better than it might first look. The triggers are really well judged too. The only thing that detracts is that pushing the analogue sticks in takes a little too much force. These could have been softened up a little.

THE GAMEPLAY TEST
The rumble function is actually pretty weak and feeble, the original pads have much more kick to them. Presumably Naki weren't able to insert such powerful motors into this little controller, which is a real shame because it detracts from the generally decent construction quality. But it's built well enough to be used in any game you're going to throw at it.

RATED Generally a good pad, but a few quibbles about build mean we're not going to give it excessive praise. No sir. **6**

GAME DR CD & DVD REPAIR

Manufacturer Digital Innovations **Price** £30
On sale Now **Contact** www.digitalinnovations.com

THE OVERVIEW
The idea behind this vaguely Klingon piece of hardware is that it resurfaces your CDs that have been battered or scratched. Fit the disc into the spinner and apply the fluid, give it a (really amazingly slow) spin and the disc will be all shiny again. But it's not going to magically mend really deep scores or total loss of silvering. This will work on *some* damage, not all. It's an ace option for saving some overly battered favourite CDs, but it's no magic rescue for the really dead discs.

THE TEST
It's really easy to use and, on repeated use, has fixed some DVDs and CDs, much to the amazement of onlookers. If a scratch is too deep then this isn't going to get your drive reading the disc again. By the same token it doesn't take the surface off them as some people feared. Hardly a must have item, but worth a go if you're the despondent owner of lightly damaged silver discs.

RATED Fairly throw away. This is the a gadget for the mad, the obsessive, the desperate or the very rich. **7**

NAKI G-SHOCK RACING WHEEL

From Naki **Price** £35 **On sale** Now
Contact www.nakiusa.com

OVERVIEW
The Naki Racing Wheel is a fairly predictable contraption, with nothing much to mark it out from the crowd. In typical Xbox green it's a chunky beast that needs to be affixed to a desk or table via suckers.

ERGONOMICS
All the main button controls feel out of range. All the thumb buttons could have been positioned so as to be in reach of a racing hand, but instead they sit inside the body of the wheel, way out of reach.

CONTROLS
The controls feel well built, even if they are out of the way. The wheel responds well to your actions and really adds a lot to rallying games particularly. However the paddles which constitute the replacement for the trigger buttons feel rather flimsy and feeble. A real shame as they're vital to so many games.

THE GAMEPLAY TEST
The wheel really adds loads to a racing game. But only because it *is* a wheel. Compared to the many other turning circles this seems cheap and uninspired. It's better than playing with a pad, but that's about it.

RATED Not the most expensive wheel in the world, nor the best. Entertaining nonetheless. **6**

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www.europe.creative.com

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Mad Catz
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Saitek
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Spectravideo/ Logic 3
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www.spectravideo.com

Thrustmaster
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CHEATS ✔ TIPS ✔ TACTICS ✔ SOLUTIONS ✔

STAYING

WARNING! XBOX'S MOST EXPLOSIVE GAMES—DEFUSED

Our Games Inspectors gain unfettered access to tips of mass instruction.

Xpert tip

mathoffman's pro bmx 2

BMX tips for you to top.

All music tracks
L, ←, ←, →, →, →, X, X

Cory's videos
R, Y, X, X, Y, Y, Y, R

Joe's videos
R, ↑, A, B, ↓, R

Kevin's videos
R, A, B, ↓, ↑, R

Mat's videos
R, ←, X, ←, X, ←, R

Mike's videos
R, X, A, A, X, A, A, R

Nate's videos
R, ↓, B, X, ↓, B, X, R

Reuben's videos
R, ←, →, ←, →, ←, →, R

Rick's videos
R, L, →, R, ←, R

Seth's videos
R, ↑, ↑, X, X, X, R

Simon's videos
R, L, L, R, L, L, R

Unlock all levels except the road trip ones
Y, →, →, B, ↓, Y

Road trip levels
Boston
Y, ↑, ↓, ↓, ↑, Y

Chicago
Y, ↑, B, ↑, B, Y

Vegas
Y, R, ←, L, →, Y

LA
Y, ←, B, B, ←, Y

New Orleans
Y, ↓, →, ↑, ←, Y

Portland
Y, A, A, B, B, Y

Unlock Big Foot
B, →, ↑, →, ↑, Y

Unlock Day Smith
B, ↑, ↓, ↑, ↓, Y

Unlock The Mime
B, ←, →, ←, →, ←

Unlock Vanessa
B, ↓, ←, ←, ↓, Y

Unlock Volcano
B, ↑, ↑, A, ↑, ↑, A

UNDERCOVER AGENTS

Calling all gaming geniuses. Don't keep your quality tips, hints and cheats to yourself. Share your good fortune with us. Rewards await...

SECRET SERVICE

CRAZY TAXI 3

Expert mode
Hold down ○ and ● when you select your character (with Ⓐ).

No arrows
Hold ○ when you select your character.

No destination mark
Hold down ● when you select your character.
James Phelan, Hereford

MADDEN NFL 2003

Better chance to win coin toss
Hold ↓ after heads or tails is chosen. You will usually win the coin toss.

Thanksgiving commentary
Set the system date to the third Thursday in November.

Christmas commentary
Set the system date to December 25 to hear John Madden say "Merry Christmas to all".

New Year's commentary
Set the system date to January 1.
Tim Rowsell, Lincs

Xpert tip

silent hill 2

Cut the psychiatrist fees... with these.

Obtain book of memories
In a replay game, look in a magazine display case in the Texxon Gas Station.

Obtain DOG key
Clear the In Water, Maria and Leave Endings on one save file to make a DOG key appear inside a Doghouse near Jack's Inn in Southvale Silent Hill.

Obtain obsidian goblet
In a replay game, go to the Silent Hill: Historical Society. After the first room, look in one of the display cases for the goblet. You'll need this to get the rebirth ending.

Obtain rebirth ending
Beat the replay game having collected the obsidian goblet, the white chrism, the book of memories and the book of crimson ceremony.

Obtain the book of crimson ceremony
Look on the bookshelf, across from the headphones in the reading room, Evil Lakeview Hotel (replay game).

Obtain white chrism
Having beaten the game once, the chrism is in the kitchen at Room 105, Boue Creek.

YOU WILL NEVER BE DEFEATED!

ALIVE

SPECIAL AGENT

Xpert tip

the thing

Just the Thing...

Hint: persuade a person
When someone's trust is in the orange and they will not do anything for you, enter first-person mode and aim the gun at their head for three seconds. They will now do things for you without good trust.

Hint: skip first boss battle
Hold ↑/← to run diagonally when you enter and you should run under it before it can hit you. This will also aim you directly at the junction box. Immediately start fixing it. As soon as it is almost fixed, hold → to run through the door. Hopefully it will be fixed before the boss attacks for the third time.

Hint: defeating the second big Thing
Fix the electrical panel in the garage. Near the middle of the big door, there is an opening between two of the crates. Using your grenade launcher in first-person targeting, send in tons of grenades. Run into the Thing's room and on the far wall from the big door, throw the switch. This'll probably kill the Thing with you taking one hit.

GET IT NOW!

HELP!
Gaming emergency? Never fear, help is at hand. Email or write to:
xgamer@futurenet.co.uk
XGamer Magazine, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW

SECRET SERVICE

STREET HOOPS
Enter at cheats screen

Clown outfits
Ⓧ, Ⓑ, Ⓧ, Ⓨ

Cowboy outfits
Ⓨ, ○, ○, Ⓡ

Elvis outfits
Ⓨ, ●, ○, ●, ●, ○, Ⓑ, ●

Kung Fu outfits
Ⓨ, Ⓨ, Ⓧ, Ⓑ

Santa Claus outfits
○, ●, ○, ●

Pimp outfits
Ⓡ, Ⓧ, Ⓨ, ●

Tuxedo outfits
●, ●, Ⓨ, Ⓧ
Lisa Kelly, Bolton

BLADE 2
At the main menu, hold down Ⓑ, then enter these codes.

Unlock all missions
↓, ↑, ←, ←, Ⓑ, →, ↓, Ⓧ

Unlock daywalker difficulty
←, Ⓑ, ↑, ↓, Ⓧ, Ⓑ, Ⓐ

Unlock all weapons
Ⓧ, Ⓑ, ↓, ←, Ⓑ, Ⓑ, Ⓨ
Mike Peters, Surrey

XGAMER SECRET SERVICE

Discovered a sneaky cheat or tip in a game? Broken into a secret area or sabotaged the game physics? Then tell us! We'll print the coolest finds of the month and give a top prize to the best.

Name _____
Address _____
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Game name _____
My discovery is _____
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Send to: On XGamer's Secret Service, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.
or email: xgamer@futurenet.co.uk

JOYTECH®

The best reader tip bags a multiplayer starter kit from Joytech (consists of three extra pads, a system link cable and an RGB SCART cable. Nice.)

NEXT MONTH... PASS EVERY LICENCE IN SEGA GT

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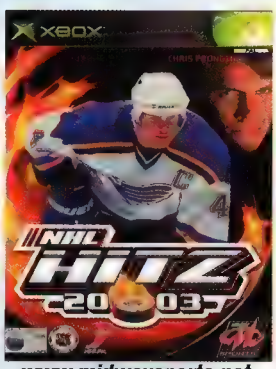

NHL HITZ -20 03-

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XBOX PlayStation.2 NINTENDO GAMECUBE

NHLPA

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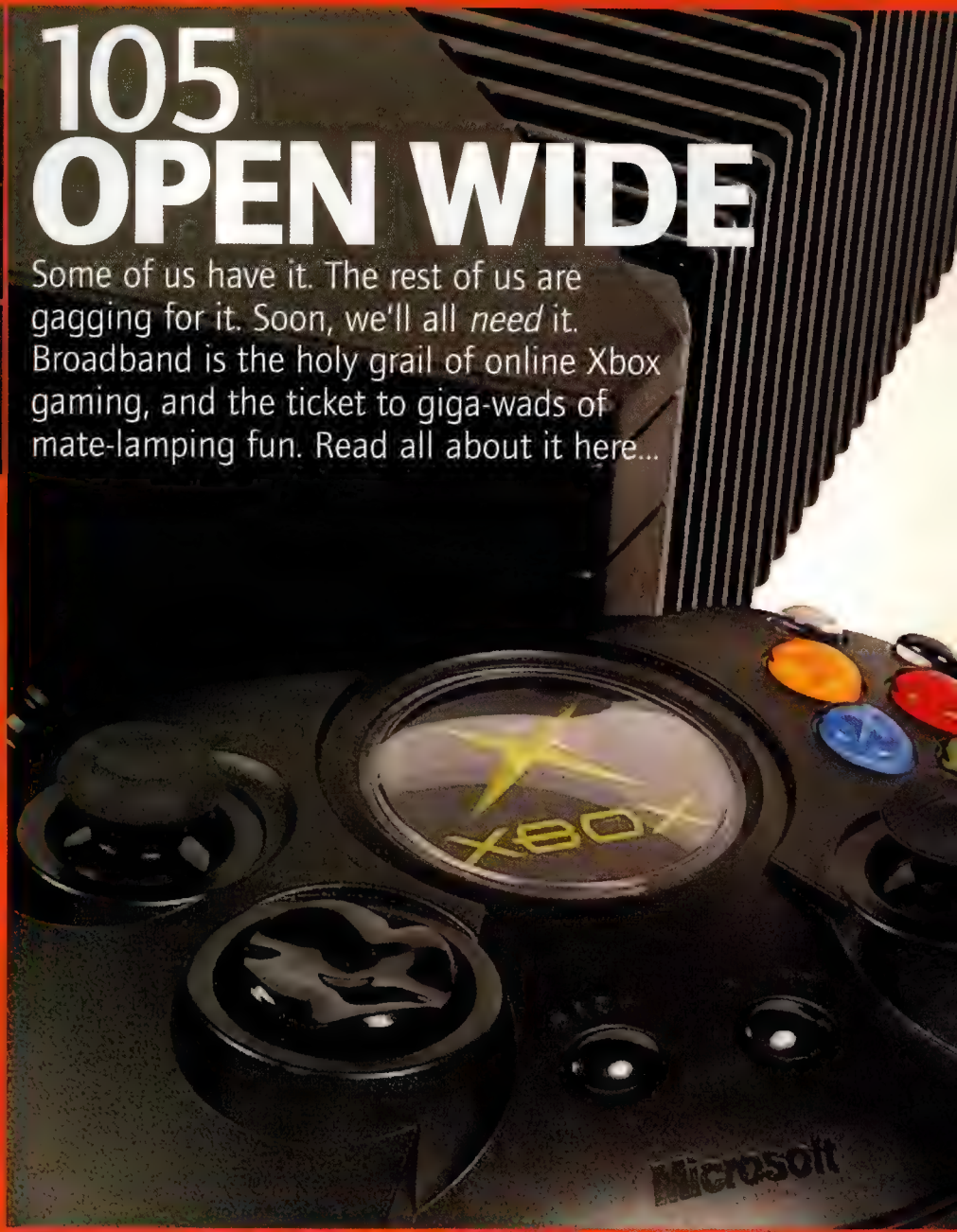
XBOX insider

XGAMER DELVES INTO THE DARKEST DEPTHS OF XBOX...

WIN STUFF!
PLAY WITH US! ON P126

105 OPEN WIDE

Some of us have it. The rest of us are gagging for it. Soon, we'll all *need* it. Broadband is the holy grail of online Xbox gaming, and the ticket to giga-wads of mate-lamping fun. Read all about it here...



select

105 **PIPE DREAMS**
The bamboozling broadband equation rendered down into brain-friendly chunks by our online guru.

114 **POST APOCALYPSE**
Bark off your irks or praise what's good. You have the floor.

116 **BURNING QUESTIONS**
Like Dear Deidre, only we deal with hardware and software queries rather than ill-fated relationships.

118 **SUBSCRIBE...**
Get **XGamer** cheap, straight to your door, and never talk to that oddball in the newsagents EVER AGAIN.

120 **THE LOWDOWN...**
Customised Xboxes. Can there be anything more weird and wonderful? Leopardskin lives.

124 **GIZZA JOB**
Earn pots of cash as a development director, just like this chap.

125 **THE MAKING OF...**
Project Ego is dead. Long live *Fable*.

126 **COMPO**
Win a fancy racing chair, steering wheel, Xbox and the lovely *Rallisport Challenge*.

128 **COMPO WINNERS**
We reveal the winners to our Inspect-A-Gadget compo. *Finally.*

23 PAGES OF PLUM-TWITCHING INFO

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Who says Xbox is finished?

E117 on sale November 4

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Feature: **The truth about broadband**

INSIDE!
- How a high-speed Internet connection will revolutionise Xbox gaming across the globe.
- How you can hook up with minimal fuss and effort.
- How much it'll cost and what you'll get for your dosh.

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106 **WHAT IS BROADBAND?**
Time to cut through all the bluster—discover what this super-fast Internet connection is all about right here.

107 **ARE YOU GETTING IT?**
Can you get it? How do you get it? And what exactly are you getting? All will be made clear...

107 **WIRE FRAMED**
The rival broadband systems tussle near-naked in a muddy trench and we hold up the score-cards.

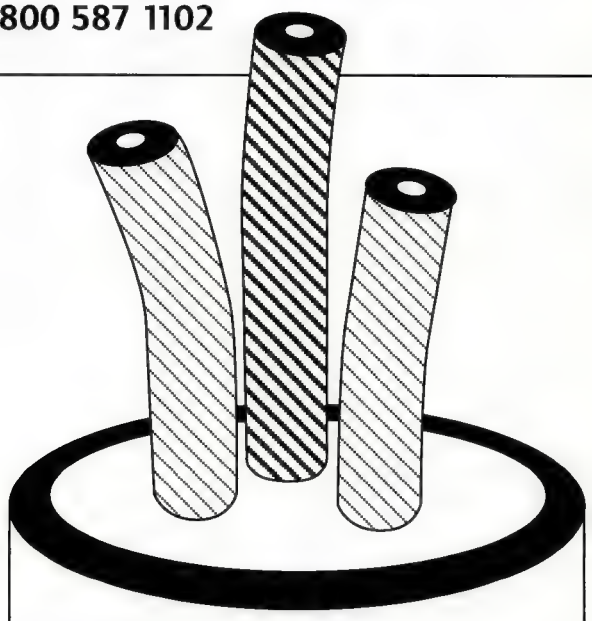
108 **BROADBAND BUNDLES**
Broadband packages are changing monthly—here's a snapshot of top contenders vying for your credit.

110 **GET CONNECTED**
A poltroon's guide to how the different services hook up at home—complete with easy-to-crayon-in pictures.

112 **JUSTIFY YOUR LOVE**
Seven ways to convince your beloved that broadband will transform your life. Best read aloud to whale song.

113 **XBOX LIVE**
How broadband will turn solitary 'box batterers into filthy world dominators with embarrassing gamertags.

IMPORTANT!
Before using this product, read the Instruction Manual for important safety and health information.



Pipe Dreams

As gamers the world over gear up for massively multiplayer slaughter in Xbox Live, it's time to upgrade to an ultra-fast Internet connection so you can join in the fun. Xbox can't get online without a broadband pipe. That's why we've badgered every telesales person and senior executive working for the three major broadband providers—not to mention a few current users—to bring you all the facts on how to get online with style.

We'll tell you how to connect, how much it'll cost and which option you should go for without baffling you with science. We'll expose the bottom line and tell it as it is, rather than regurgitating the gospel according to the broadband companies.

Is it the revolution in home entertainment they're promising? What the hell do you get for your money anyway? Is this the right time to buy? Discover the answers to these questions and more overleaf...

Get in there...

Section_00000

What is Broadband?

Terrified by jargon? Bewildered by modem talk? Time for a plain-speaking introduction to high-speed Internet action.

Basically, broadband is an Internet connection which transfers data much faster than a normal phone connection using a 56K modem. In fact, a typical broadband hook-up can pipe ten times the information of a typical modem, with premium services now some 20-40 times faster than your average 'narrowband' link.

This not only enables you to access Internet sites and download information at high speeds, it also provides much more efficient access to data-intensive services, such as high-quality streaming video and audio—and, of course, Internet gaming.

HOW IT WORKS

The most common way to receive broadband is by 'piping it' into your home using underground cable which runs 'directly' into your house. There are two main ways of doing this. First, through your existing telephone wiring, via a hook-up provide by, say, BT. It's much the same as the system most people use for narrowband Internet at the moment, except you need a beefed-up modem and a few extra nick-nacks to run it.

Obviously, most modern home computers come fitted with an internal modem, typically 56K models, although external ones aren't uncommon. However, these aren't capable of transmitting or receiving enough data to take advantage of broadband and, besides, Microsoft has set a minimum connection speed of 256K for Xbox Live use.

The other option is cable modem—another pipe, this time consisting of fibre-optic cables, and capable of transferring massive amounts of data. This technology effectively piggy-backs on cable TV wiring, so you do need a technician to connect you up to the main cable—although, naturally, you also get the option to buy additional services, such as TV and telephone packages.

ADSL AND ALL THAT

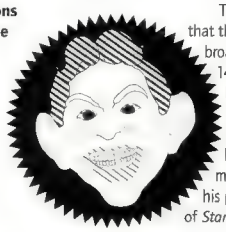
The 'telephone' form of broadband is termed ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Link). It's called 'Asymmetric' because the line receives data far quicker than it sends it. That's because a typical Internet user wants to extract more information from the Web than he or she puts into it—downloading classic Yasmin Bleeth *Baywatch* clips, for instance.

One of the key advantages of both cable and ADSL broadband services is that they are 'always on'—which means you can finally wave goodbye to that dial-up process which so bores traditional surfers. Great news for us lardy-arsed console gamers who simply want to 'plug-in-and-play', too.

But first, whether you've opted for a cable or a telephone connection, you'll need to split your signal using what are called microfilters. These are readily available from broadband providers for around a fiver and enable you to receive phone calls while still maintaining your 'always on' connection. A major plus if you don't want to hog the family phone line, especially if you risk having a glorious *Unreal* victory scuppered by an impatient, wire-cutter-wielding sibling expecting an important call.

BROADBAND BRITAIN

Prime Minister Tony Blair reckons broadband is a key factor in the future strength of the British economy. The government wants Britain to have the greatest broadband penetration of any Western country by 2005. He's got some way to go, according to a report published last month by Nielsen/NetRatings.



The respected statsmeisters reckon that the UK is bottom of the European broadband league table with only 14% of people having access to high-speed Internet connections at home. Germany (45%), Sweden (43%) and the Netherlands (41%) lead the broadband revolution by a mile. Seems Mr Blair will have to put his plans for a 56 million-player game of *Star Wars Galaxies* on ice.

Sub section_0000.5

Decision Time

Going to work on the blabbering salespeople and extracting the facts from their witter-strewn PR blah...

So you're interested in broadband? We reckon there are five basic questions to ask yourself before you take the plunge. Turn to the relevant feature sections to learn more...

Step1 CAN I CONNECT?

Because BT doesn't have enough telephone exchanges to transmit broadband signals to every single household, and because cable can't be laid in every street (folks in posh streets with listed buildings, please take note), there are some places in Britain where your options are limited, or you simply can't receive broadband. Clearly, access to the service should be the first thing on your agenda (Look right).

Step2 CABLE OR PHONE?

Assuming you have a choice (and, it's fair to say, most people do), it's time to look at your options. What are the technical merits of cable and phone connections—and how will they affect your gaming experience? Find out over on the right.

Step3 WHICH PROVIDER?

Choosing your Internet Service Provider (ISP) depends largely on whether you elect for a cable or telephone connection. If you're not bothered about minor technical differences between the two options, this guide will show you how the options affect your pocket (See page 108).

Step4 WHICH SET UP?

Once you've finally opted for your connection and service provider, it's time to hook the boxes up and get the infernal machines working. See how it works on page 110.

Step5 WHAT DO I GET?

The best bit. We tell you what you get in exchange for all the hassle (On page 112).

Step 1 Can I connect?

Section_00001

Are you getting it?

Hebridean sheep farmers, prepare for some bad news...

Not everyone in Britain has access to affordable broadband. The cable option, for instance, is dependent on the network of high-tech wires piped underground.

If you live in a remote area or a stuck-up part of the country where digging up the road is a no-no, you probably can't tap into it. As for the cable that does exist, NTL and Telewest have divvied up the country so they each cover roughly half of broadband Britain. As a general rule, Telewest focuses on the larger conurbations, while NTL covers the more provincial locations. Do a postcode test at **www.telewest.co.uk** or **www.ntl.com** to see if you're covered.

BT's broadband coverage is no more comprehensive. The company currently aims to provide the service to more densely populated areas. Basically, if you live close enough to one of their 1,117 exchanges, you're okay.

If you live in rural areas, the chances are you're not going to be able to join the broadband revolution just yet. Figures from BT suggest 66% of the UK's population can receive BT's broadband service. Again, check **www.BT.com** and input your phone number to see if you can connect.

NTL In these delicately hashed zones your cable operator is NTL, so give them a tinkle.

Telewest Would you believe it, the fat hashes denote the presence of Telewest and their pipes

How the cable companies have carved up broadband Britain. Note the large areas of untouched land...

RURAL RUMBLINGS
BT has recently pledged to set up a registration list in rural areas for people who want broadband. If enough people register, they've promised to set up a local exchange for aet up a local exchange for access. For more info, visit www.BT.com.

Sub section_0001.5

Euro boost

Not in one of the 'big eight' countries? Check this out...

You can get Xbox Live in Europe even if you don't live in a launch country (UK, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Belgium, Holland Sweden). Simply buy a starter kit and hook up to broadband. Microsoft say it will work, you just won't get customer or language support.

GO 'WEST
Old Bill has a 22% share in Telewest, so expect a Microsoft bundle to be agreed pretty soon...

Step 2 Cable or phone?

Section_00002

Wire Framed

For those of you with the choice, read on...

While the results are broadly the same, there are subtle differences between the two main broadband technologies. Unsurprisingly, there are quality issues attached to ADSL telephone broadband—mainly because it still relies on 19th century technology (copper-wire cable).

The further away from the telephone exchange you are, the weaker the signal. That's why BT cannot promise all phone users this service. It's being extremely cautious to ensure you do not take up broadband if there are going to be issues of data loss. Technically, the signal can travel a round trip of 13km, but you're snookered if you live more than 5.5km away from an exchange—that's the cut-off point imposed by BT.

Contention ratio (see right) is something to look out for when hooking up to cable. If you live near a bunch of tech heads who'll be sharing your bandwidth, chances are your connection will slow down. (Your broadband operator should tell you how many of your neighbours are also using their service). In that event, you might want to fork out on a premium service with a lower contention ratio. What's more, cable can be upgraded to a superior transmission medium (fibre-optic cable), which is several times faster than ADSL.

Verdict

At the moment, cable looks like the best option, but that peak-time slowdown could drive you up the wall during a fierce *Halo 2* multiplayer extravaganza.

Sub section_0002.5

Contention Ratio

The Contention Ratio is the number of people who share your bandwidth. The lower the ratio, the less chance there is of your service slowing down when everyone hops on board. A typical figure of 50:1, for instance, tells you that 50 people share the same pipe. Some ISPs offer a 20:1 service—at a price...

Minimum Spec

If you want to use ADSL broadband on your PC or Mac, BT recommends a Pentium II or above, 64MB RAM and a 20MB hard drive. Only cavemen with computers need not apply, then.

Section_00003

MORE DOSH
You'll have to pay extra for your subscription to Xbox Live. It's not included in your broadband fee at the moment.

Broadband Aid

Which broadband offer is best for you? We help you decide.

It's time to check out a few figures and work out just exactly what this experiment in high-speed Internet access is going to cost you. Be warned: a bloody price war is in full effect at the minute, so figures are changing almost monthly. What's more, a smattering of hidden costs (activation charges, for instance) can bump up the price of your package, so make sure you cover every base and ask telesales operators "Are there any other costs involved?" before you set off on a long-winded sign-up process.

Unfortunately, it's not just a simple case of contacting the relevant company and booking its ready-to-go package just yet. Xbox has an ethernet socket, not the standard USB port used to hook cable/ADSL modems to PCs, so you'll need to double-check your potential Internet Service Provider supplies an ethernet-enabled modem before you can continue.

It's also worth noting that you don't have to commit to buying the hardware provided by the ISP. Sometimes you can buy your own modem from another source, which could actually save you money. And since modems differ little in terms of performance, you'll almost certainly avoid compromising the quality of your connection.

Of course, if you're feeling really flush, you could always shell out on both ADSL and cable options, sidestepping any network snags with a quick flick of a switch. It's a costly solution, though.

Cable

NTL

£24.99 per month for a 600K modem, rather than the standard 512K model.
Free installation.

Telewest

£25 installation fee. £29.99 per month or £25 if you subscribe to one of its digital TV packages.

NTL extras

- Family TV package–£26 extra per month (So £50.99 per month with broadband). Over 90 digital channels, including CNN, Nickelodeon, MTV, Sky One, Sky Sports News, and UK Gold.
- Family, Sky Movies & Sky Sports–£47 extra per month. All Sky Sports, all the Sky Movie channels and the rest of the family package. Over 100 channels in all.
- Talk Unlimited–£25 extra per month. This bags you free local and national rate calls.

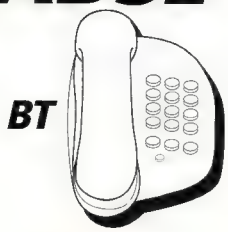
Telewest extras

- Standard Digital TV package–£15 extra per month. You get a phone line and 17 extra TV channels, including ITV2 and Sky News.
- Standard Digital TV + Talk Unlimited–£31 extra per month. Talk Unlimited means free local and national phone calls.
- Essential Digital TV package–£18.50 per month (£34.50 with Talk Unlimited). Phone line plus 37 extra TV channels, including Sky One, Eurosport, Play and Fox Kids.
- Essential Plus package–£21.50 extra per month (£37.50 with Talk Unlimited). Phone plus 41 extra channels, including UK Gold +1, UK Gold 2, The History Channel and Sci-fi.
- Supreme Package–£25.50 per month (£41.50 with Talk Unlimited). Phone plus a whopping 90 channels to choose from, including all the MTV channels, CNN and Discovery.

The prices quoted here are for unmetered 512kps broadband services (unless otherwise stated). This is comfortably what you need for Xbox Live.

THEY'RE IN IT TOGETHER
The two big cable companies have divided the country to maximise broadband coverage. If you're living in an NTL area and you try to register with Telewest, they'll even kindly bat you in the direction of their website, and vice versa. Sweet, isn't it?

ADSL



BT

Other ISPs

- When you choose ADSL (broadband down your phoneline) you must also pick an ISP (Internet Service Provider). This does not have to be BT. Contact a BT operator and they'll ask you if you want to hear about other services. See The Best Of The Rest box for cheapo options.

- Activation charge–£30
  Monthly subscription–£27
  Modem and two microfilters–£80

Extra services

- BT Together–£11.50 per month for a phone and £2.40 of free calls.
- BT Together (local calls deal)–£14.50 per month. Includes free evening and weekend local calls.
- BT Together (local and national calls)–£18.50 per month. Includes free evening and weekend local and national calls.

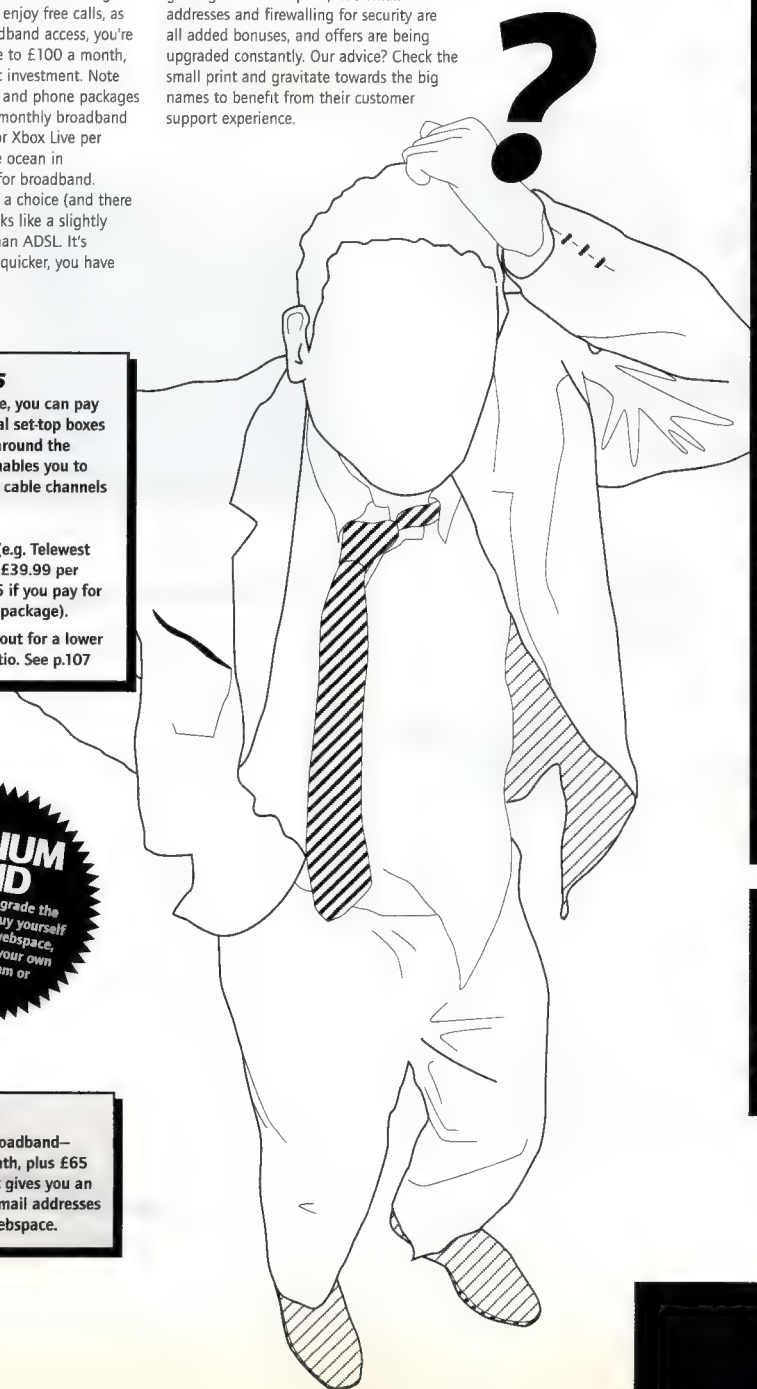
Sub section_0003.5

Verdict

Hooking up to cable opens a whole world of life-wasting entertainment to challenge your motivation when it's time to do the dishes after work. The extra benefits of the cable service are staggering. That said, to take advantage of all the TV options and enjoy free calls, as well as unlimited broadband access, you're looking at paying close to £100 a month, and that's a significant investment. Note that all those extra TV and phone packages get tacked on to your monthly broadband fee. The extra £3.33 for Xbox Live per month, is a drop in the ocean in comparison to paying for broadband.

For those who have a choice (and there aren't many), cable looks like a slightly better long-term bet than ADSL. It's generally cheaper and quicker, you have access to more services and it promises to be more upgradeable. If you can't get cable, then don't worry. ADSL will still do you proud when it comes to Xbox Live.

There's no doubt that the broadband packages offer all sorts of other extras that could sway you if you're not a purely gaming user. Web space, free email addresses and firewalling for security are all added bonuses, and offers are being upgraded constantly. Our advice? Check the small print and gravitate towards the big names to benefit from their customer support experience.



Upgrades

- For a small fee, you can pay to have several set-top boxes for your TVs around the house. This enables you to watch several cable channels at once.
- 1MB modem (e.g. Telewest 1MB services £39.99 per month, or £35 if you pay for its Digital TV package).
- You can shell out for a lower contention ratio. See p.107

PREMIUM BOND

You can often upgrade the basic package to buy yourself a little corner of webspace, so you can set up your own community, forum or website.

Upgrades

- BTopenworld broadband– £29.99 per month, plus £65 one-off fee. Just gives you an extra ten free email addresses and 20MB of webspace.

The best of the rest

The beauty of ADSL is that you decide which strapping ISP provides the service...

FREEDOM TO SURF

Without purchasing a modem, you can get this service for only £22.50 per month and you only have to commit for a single month. The only downside is that you have to pay a £59.99 activation cost and buy an ethernet-enabled modem on top of that. Freedom2surf sells microfilters for the roughly standard £8.50 each.
Contact: www.freedom2surf.net
01727 811 530

THE CATCH...

Broadband service providers often promise fantastic monthly service charges, then bump up your costs with hidden fees and contractual commitments. So read the small print–and check quotes include VAT.

PLUS NET

The incredible-sounding £20.99 monthly subscription proves to be less impressive when you consider an activation fee of £58.75 if you commit to 12 months of Plus net broadband (or £70.50 if you opt for a monthly contract).
Contact: www.plus.net
0845 1425000

PIPEX

Another low cost service that comes in at a tasty £23.44. Once again, you'll have to pay for your own hardware and fork out for the connection charge, which comes in at £58.75. The good news is that this figure is not affected by the term of your contract.
Contact: www.pipex.net
0870 600 4454

NILDRAM

Pretty good these fellas are, too, with an activation charge of £58.75 and an ultra-low monthly subscription fee of £22.99. Once again, the sting in the tail is that contract–you'll have to sign up for 12 months to take advantage of this price. Please note that Nildram is also charging a rather inflated £15 plus VAT for its microfilters.
Contact: www.nildram.net
0800 026 0950

ECLIPSE

The monthly fee of £26.61 is not bad, and compares favourably to rivals' when you consider you only need to subscribe on a month-to-month basis. Not a bad idea when you consider the price of broadband has been in freefall in recent months. Connection is the usual £58.75 (£50 plus VAT).
Contact: www.eclipse.net.uk
01392 333302

Stamp of approval

Microsoft is on a mission to test every piece of broadband equipment on the market, with the sole aim of making Xbox Live as accessible as possible. The four or five port router (see p.111 for router info) which Bill thinks will be most effective will be awarded an Xbox Live logo. This will certify that it's been tested and comes with official endorsement.

Section_00004

Getting Connected

It's as simple as watching a man make your computer work. And the great thing is—you're not paying by the hour...

Because the Xbox's Internet pipe passage is an ethernet port and not a USB input, you'll need a special modem to hook up to broadband. But remember, there is *no* such thing as an 'ethernet modem'. You need to buy a cable/ADSL modem with an ethernet port, bearing in mind that some modems will also boast a USB port.

FULLY COMPATIBLE
Microsoft has been gassing with broadband providers to ensure Xbox works with nigh-on every modem, set-top box and router out there. Just install the Xbox Live starter disc—and play!

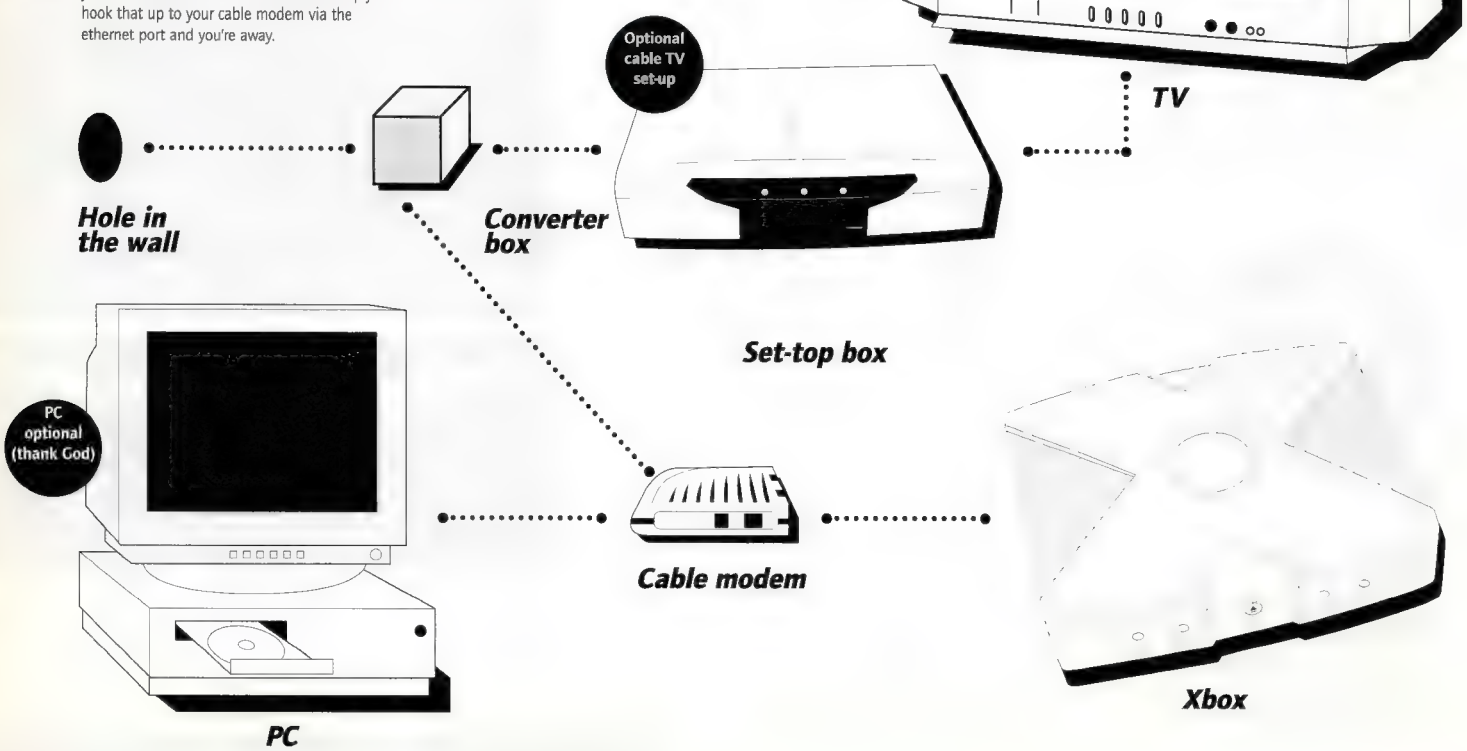
Cable Guide

So you're considering cable for the ultimate Xbox Live experience? Here's how the options hook up.

Sub section_0004.51

Option 1 Cable Broadband

Once an engineer has connected your house to the main cable line, he'll jam a pipe through your wall that ends in a converter box. Simply hook that up to your cable modem via the ethernet port and you're away.



Section_00004

Piping Hot Content

Everyone's a techno-wizard...

If you're about as handy with a screwdriver as an impatient baboon, you may be a little concerned to hear that you install your BT broadband line yourself. Fortunately, the process is simple enough. However, if you haven't already got cable and you opt for cable broadband, you'll need an engineer to visit and carry out all that vital cabling work. They'll bury a cable from your house to the main wire running through your street. If you also have a set-top box for cable TV installed, then engineers will configure your TV and demonstrate how your video/recordable DVD works with it, how you can order movies and so on. From start to finish, the process takes about 2-3 hours (the engineer has to dig to direct the cable to your home, then drill a small hole in your wall to feed it through).

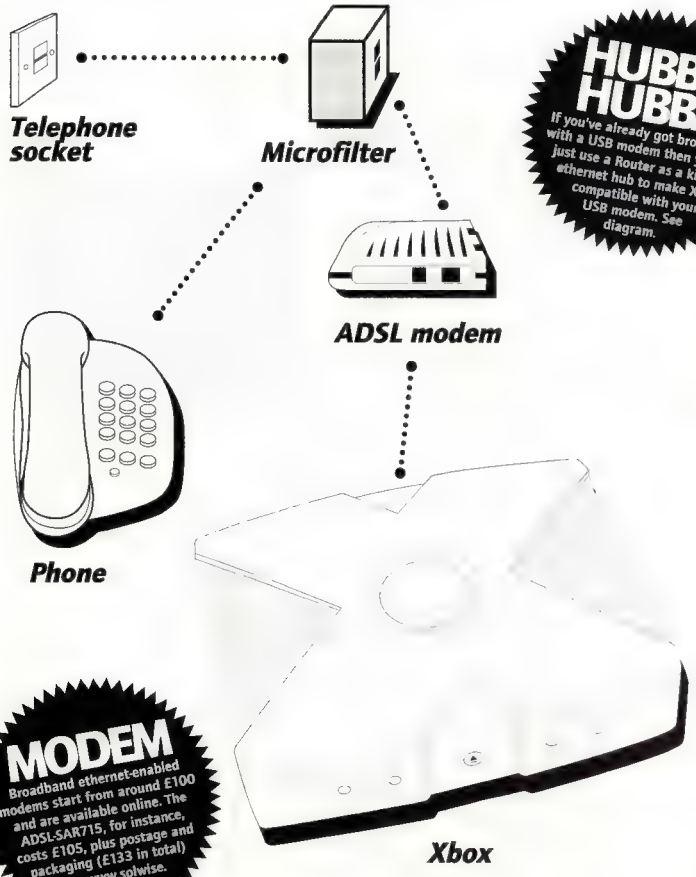
STOP PRESS

NTL has just announced plans for a new device, the Mugwum, which will enable you to plug your PC and Xbox in, and allow you to use them simultaneously.

Sub section_0004.52

Option 2 ADSL Broadband

This is a self-install kit. BT offers a PC CD-ROM installation disc to get you going with its standard USB modem. Obviously, your Xbox needs to hook up to an ADSL modem with an ethernet port, too—time to nab that decent modem and plug it in.



HUBBA HUBBA

If you've already got broadband with a USB modem then you can just use a Router as a kind of ethernet hub to make Xbox compatible with your USB modem. See diagram.

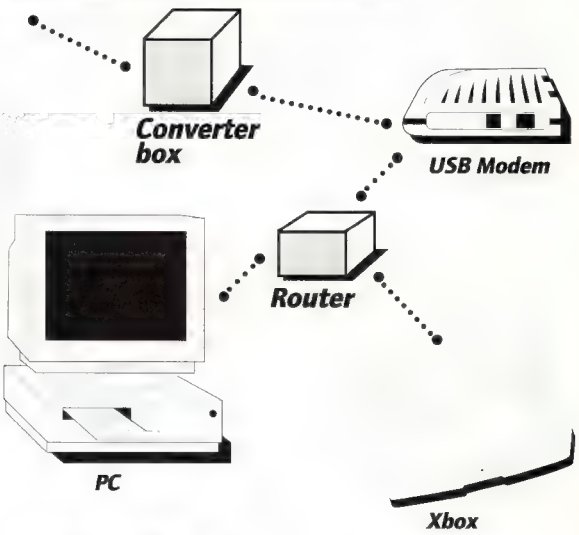
MODEM

Broadband ethernet-enabled modems start from around £100 and are available online. The ADSL-SAR715, for instance, costs £105, plus postage and packaging (£133 in total) from www.solwise.co.uk

Sub section_0004.53

Option 3 Router cable

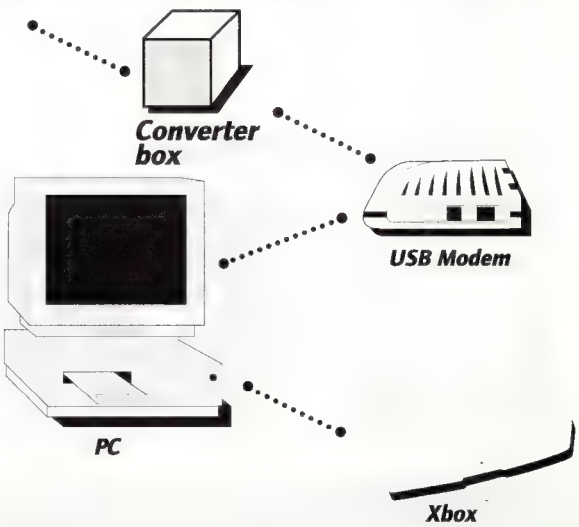
If you want your Xbox to share a broadband connection with other hardware—like a PC—then you just need to splash out for a Router...



Sub section_0004.54

Option 4 PC Sharing

With a bit of technical tinkery, you can set up a sharing system on your PC to squeeze the broadband signal onto the Xbox.



Section_00005

Justify Your Love

Chances are your other half won't fancy chipping in for broadband, so here's how you can change their mind.

There's a world of goodies made possible by the magic of broadband. And not all of them can be put to good use via www.bigboobs.com... We count down the magnificent seven bonuses of piping broadband into your home—a sensational septet that could just convince your partner this broadband malarkey is worth forking out for...

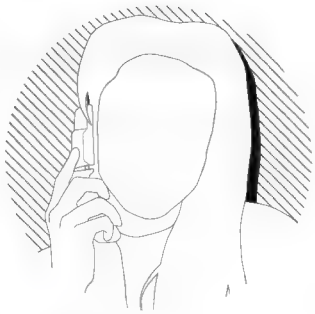
DOWN TIME

With broadband, a 30-second video clip takes just 0.4 minutes to download, as opposed to 3.5 minutes with a narrowband link. An MP3 track takes around 2.5 (instead of 12) minutes.

7 TV

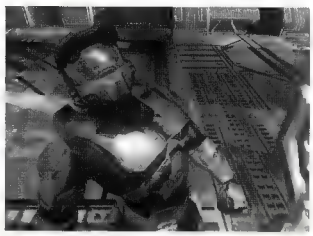
Hooking up to cable with its snazzy optical wires means you can subscribe to cable TV and access an outrageous range of programming and interactive goodies. Buy gorgeous gear from major shops, place a bet on the footie... you can even play a range of basic games. But be warned: premium TV channels can prove costly. And don't expect to get the *Playboy* channel in the family bundle deal.

6 CALLS



Broadband enables you to natter away on the blower while the Internet is running. That means you can blatter your enemies on Xbox Live, shout at them through the Voice Communicator and order a take-away curry all at the same time.

5 STREAMING VIDEO

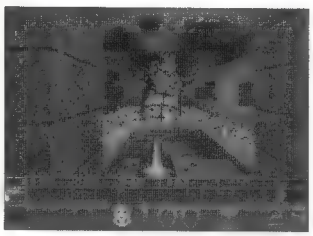


Ever stumbled across an Internet site featuring streaming video? Only to find you could watch one frame every 20 seconds, thereby missing the entire point of the action? That's because your crappy modem can't handle the fat data bundle being piped in your general direction. With broadband plugged into a PC, you'll be able to watch streaming movies with ease—from Hollywood blockbusters to smooth webcams, where you can chat face-to-face with friends (and foes) on the other side of the world.

4 RADIO

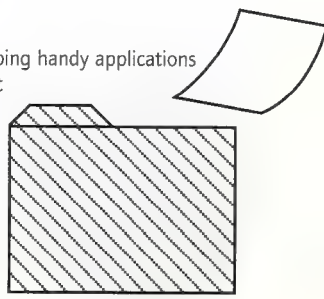
Digital radio is commonly available on the Internet or through cable packages and offers high-quality sounds and more choice than Robbie Williams in a Stoke nightclub. Apart from nicer-sounding versions of the usual run of stations, a raft of digital-only stations (such as new black music station 1Xtra from the BBC) are also available.

3 PC GAMING



There's no doubt the PC delivers some top-notch gaming experiences—when it comes to online play it's the only format with any proven pedigree in the field. With massively multiplayer communities playing titles such as *Everquest* and hardened first-person shooter fanatics popping nukes in each other via *Quake* and *Counter-Strike*, there's a lot of gaming fun to be had out there. Best of all, you don't need to pay for shooters such as *Quake* and *Unreal*. However, premium services such as those provided by blueyonder (Telewest) are increasingly offering cheat-busting, secure services, much like Xbox Live.

2 DOWNLOADS



Whether you're sourcing images or nabbing handy applications off the Internet, your home modem isn't very fast. A 56K device is capable of carrying 56,000 bits of information in one second; a standard broadband cable of 512K is pretty much ten times faster. Get a 1MB connection and you'll be able to download a typical file 20 times faster than your average home connection.

Section_00005

EYE SPY!
Current technology could support a visual as well as audio link-up, at least according to one broadband specialist we badgered. Thing is, if you look like the XGamer team, you're probably best off staying anonymous...

1 Xbox Live

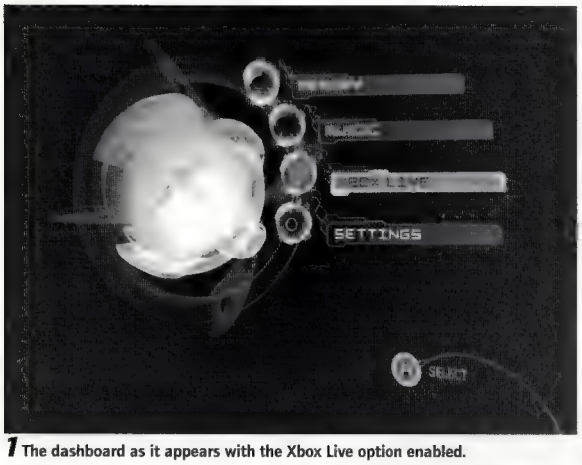
Forget the other perks. This is the big one: owning broadband is a one-way ticket to online gaming heaven...

It's all about the games. Once you've faffed around with MP3s for a few hours and marvelled at how clear Five Live sounds on the Internet radio for ten minutes, you'll soon be back to battering voice-disguised enemies from Poland.

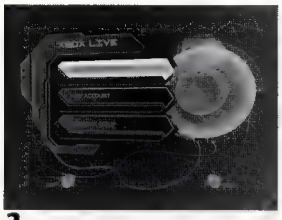
It's not just about the act of playing games, either. The Xbox Live service is a gateway to a gaming community and a better Xbox experience. And Bill Gates didn't pay us to say that. As well as tons of downloadable extras, such as characters, weapons and even entire level maps, you'll be able to instantly message friends and set up quick knockabouts on *FIFA* or a day-long fragging session on *Unreal*.

The really clever thing about Xbox Live is that it gets your console working for you. As soon as you plug in, your Xbox instantly scans the Xbox Live community to find out if there are any stat updates or extras for games with saves on its hard drive. Without having to hunt about, a little message blinks into your Inbox asking if you'd like to upgrade. Of course, since your connection will be at least ten times faster than a normal Net link-up, any such technical tinkering then takes mere seconds.

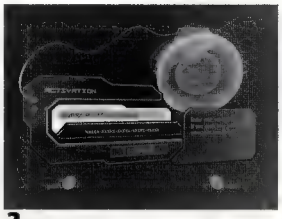
It doesn't stop there, either, because installing the Xbox Live starter disc actually changes the way your machine looks. Instead of the usual three options for altering your set-up, a fourth Xbox Live options appears—as follows...



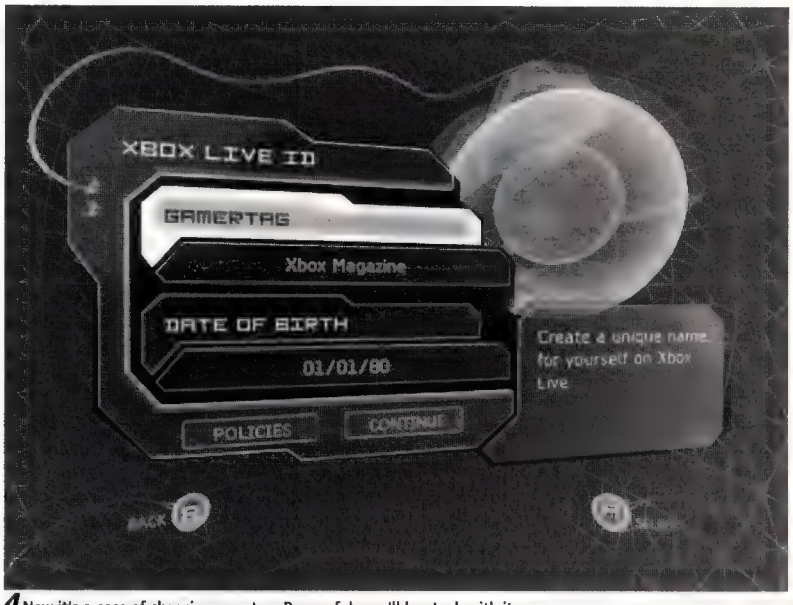
1 The dashboard as it appears with the Xbox Live option enabled.



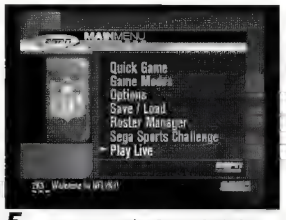
2 Activate the Live option and you're on your way to online gaming.



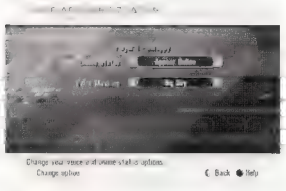
3 First off, you need to enter an activation code supplied by Microsoft.



4 Now it's a case of choosing your tag. Be careful—you'll be stuck with it.



5 How easy was that? *NFL 2K3* shows just how quickly you'll be able to hook up to enjoy online play.



6 Now it's just a case of fiddling with the details so you can disguise your voice as a big man. Odd, but fun.

Xbox Live Countdown

30 October
Limited Beta test starts

30 November
Open Beta test starts

14 March 2003
Xbox Live launches, costing £39.99 for one year's membership (that's £3.33 per month), which includes a free voice communicator headset and two cut-down demo games (*Moto GP* and *Whacked*).

Sub section_0004.51

Any Questions?

Simply email your queries to our panel of broadband nuts at: **xgamer@fxmi.com** We're here to help. If we ignore you then simply get on the blasted phone and nag us!

POST APOCALYPSE

Postie's come—and we've got to mop up the mess.

Epistle Artist > Jim McCauley

ALPHA MAIL—YOU'RE TOP OF THE TREE...

The write stuff. Our letter of the month receives a year's subscription to XGamer and a top Xbox game.

"ILLEGAL MOD-CHIPS"

FROM> *Thomas Bottrill, email*

I subscribe to NTK Now (www.ntk.net) and was very interested by a recent report saying new EU legislation, to be incorporated into UK law by Christmas, will render all circumvention devices (ways of getting around region coding) illegal. The story was more about the effects this could have for DeCSS (the tool that breaks the copy-protection on DVDs), but it also mentions the impact on mod-chips.

Distributors based in the EU can be sent to jail for three months to two years. It doesn't say how it'll affect buyers of mod-chips (although I expect they'll get a fine), but this effectively means that if you use a mod-chip to play import games you'll be breaking the law.

Spot-on, there. It would appear that copyright legislation simply isn't draconian enough for the EU, and that now it's getting into the business of propping up corporations' profit-motivated restrictions on free trade. That's our interpretation of regional encoding, at any rate.

The European Union Copyright Directive (as it's known) is a messy and distinctly unpleasant piece of work that could conceivably have made its way onto the statute books by the time you read this, and you're right about its likely effect on mod chips. You could even, theoretically, be sent down for selling your modded Xbox second-hand.

Nice, isn't it?

But there could still be time to do something; visit www.stand.org.uk to find out how you could help.

"WE'RE NOT STUPID"

FROM > *Chris Dawson, email*

I'm appalled to find that Xbox is now only £159. Microsoft knew full well it was going to do this; it just thought it'd rip the loyal people off not once but twice. And considering there aren't any new games—the only great one being *Halo*—if I wanted a £300 quid paperweight that's just collecting dust I'd be almost as stupid as Microsoft think we really are. Why didn't it just wait until Christmas and release Xbox at that price with a better range of games?

That's business for you. Microsoft is simply following the rules of supply and demand. And you know what? I wouldn't be surprised to see another price drop before Christmas as Microsoft does its damnedest to get an Xbox into everybody's stocking. And, speaking as someone who also paid £300 for an Xbox, I'm not too bothered; that's the price you pay for being an early adopter—and, anyway, I *really* wanted to play *Project Gotham Racing*.

"RACIST SLUR!"

FROM > *Danny, Luton*

Please remember black people pay for and read your magazine as well. Comments linking dreadlocks with "filth" (**XGamer 09**, p55) are offensive. It's a shame to read such disappointing writing in a magazine I normally enjoy.

Your argument that basketball is crap (**XGamer 09**, p71) is an interesting point, too, considering its athletes are the highest paid in the world (fact) and it's the most popular sport in America (where football is seen as crap, may I note). And what's this about basketball being racist? "*White Men Can't Jump*." So there's been no racism toward black people in the history of filmmaking... erm, whoops.

You say, "the Hood vibe brings a cringe to the senses..." and stereotype black people with "your momma" comments. Don't try and link them to the white people in the game—you know who you're talking about full well when you're saying stuff like that. We ain't all rich suburban public schoolboys, remember.

Sounds like you just don't like black people. It's the first time I've ever come across anything like this in your magazine (or any Xbox magazine for that matter), and the comments have a foul air of white racism. You need to lose that. Please don't let it happen again, and apologise to anyone you may have offended in your next issue.

Let's all just enjoy Xbox and good games, agreed?

Even large one-legged folk can enjoy the pleasures of a cut-price Xbox (though they must sacrifice a sock).

Easy, tiger. Your letter takes me back ten-odd years, to a time when I flirted with student politics. You can't beat the average Student Union meeting as a place to see a cross-section of offended people. And your letter carries the same air of one determined to find offence and then get *really* cross about it.

Settle down. Dreadlocks aren't an exclusively black thing, and in my experience they're generally filthy when attached to the heads of white trustafarians and Levellers fans, and that's quite evidently what the boy Curley was referring to. And as for his *Street Hoops* review, to me that

reads more as an attack on the crass misappropriation of elements of black culture as a marketing tool.

Don't try and brand us as racists on the basis of a couple of out-of-context quotes. Racism has no place here; we're all just gamers in a big family of love.

"ANOMALOUS READINGS"

FROM > *Kane Greenough, Wigan*

Having purchased a copy of last month's magazine, I noticed a few anomalies in your scoring system. For example, *Turok Evolution*, which is a game I'm very much looking forward to playing, was given an **XGamer** verdict of 7, from a total rating of 31 (Graphics 8, Gameplay 7, Accessibility 9 and Depth 7). However, *Aggressive Inline* was given an **XGamer** verdict of 8, from a total rating of 29 (Graphics 7, Gameplay 8, Accessibility 6, and Depth 8), and *Conflict: Desert Storm* was rated an 8 from a total of 31 (the same as *Turok*). Please could you explain how your ratings scheme works?

It's not a strict average; it's a summing-up of the game's general worth, a single-digit translation of the reviewer's overall opinion. And, of course, some criteria are more important than others, but not in any particularly straightforward way. It depends on the individual game.

I'll gladly forgive a game for rubbish graphics if it delivers strongly in other areas, and there are some rare games that are lacking in graphics, accessibility and depth, yet still provide more than enough gameplay to make me extremely happy. Really, though, if you want the definitive guide to whether a game's any good or not, ignore the ratings box and read the words in the review. They should make matters perfectly clear; if not, we're not doing our jobs properly.

"LIVE RUMBLES"

FROM > *Spud Hed, Cornwall*

For the last two months now, I've been listening to various people going on about how great Xbox Live is going to be, and I admit it sounds great. However, when designing it, did Microsoft think to shave a bit off its enormous budget to provide a low bandwidth network for those of us who won't see broadband until their console is a museum piece? No. Then will I be getting cut-price games as I'm going to be missing out on half of them? No. Don't get me wrong, I love my Xbox. I'm just beginning to feel a bit ripped off–and I'm sure I'm not the only one.

And on a similar note...

FROM > *Shane O'Connor, Ireland*

Everybody keeps ranting on about how much Xbox Live is going to kick ass and be the best thing since sliced bread, and I would too but for one small detail, I'm Irish... and why would that be a problem, I hear you say? Well, here it is: the Republic of Ireland has less than 1% broadband coverage. Most developing countries have more than that. Is Microsoft even considering a narrowband service for countries like mine (and I'm sure there are a few) or are we to wait for four or five years till the coverage is expanded?

I feel your pain. I live in a village a couple of miles outside of Bath, and can I get broadband? Can I hell. And, like you, I'll just have to wait (or move house), because a narrowband solution just isn't going to happen. Microsoft wants to provide the kind of rich online experience that simply can't be squeezed down a 56K pipe, so those of us with the bad luck to live in an area where BT (or whoever) doesn't see broadband as a priority are forced to miss out for the time being.

Live in a non-broadband area? Contact BT to force a change. See our broadband feature on p105 for details.

SPOT THE BULL COMPETITION

Mistakes? Us? Never...

We are never wrong. The following are just glitches in the Matrix. Errors in the flux. Bugs in the system. Fish in the sea. Er...

In **XGamer 09**, in your *Tony Hawk's 4* preview, you listed the Wallie as a new feature. Sorry, but the Wallie was in *THPS 2* and *3*.
HAWKEYE! > *BartMan, email*

In the *Dead To Rights* preview, you said the release date was TBA, but on page 61 you said it was only going to be released in the USA.
YANKED! > *Marc Shinner, Wednesbury*

In your review of *Turok Evolution*, you said the minigun was three-barrelled but in the manual it says 18.
GUNNED DOWN! > *Carl Lloyd, St Helens*

A triple-barrelled minigun would be rubbish, wouldn't it? Sounds like reason enough to give Carl a free game. See? It's that easy! Force us to confront our errors; drop us a line and you might be a winner.

side lines

[illegible]
> *Steve Nicholls*
Can I? Cor! Thanks!

[illegible]
> *Dr D Panayi*
Yes, but you're forgetting the thousands of crap ones that appeared alongside them.

[illegible]
> *Marc Davison*
There speaks a man who's clearly never tripped on a joypad lead and kicked a console across the room.

[illegible]
> *Danny, Luton*
Not as much as single-issue zealots determined to find offence where there genuinely isn't any to be had.

[illegible]
> *Wayne Stroud, Brighton*
Not to mention overly-derivative of Iain M Banks' Culture novels. Still, we think it's quite good fun.

[illegible]
> *Rob Anders*
Is this some kind of euphemism? Either way I'm very happy for you.

[illegible]
> *Andrew Stratford, Worthing*
Our calendar's weird. For some reason, it appears to stop on Friday 4 October. We find this rather unsettling.

WRITE ON

[illegible]

Post it! > **XGamer** Magazine, FXM International, 30 Monmouth St, Bath, BA1 2BW

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"THE BAD OLD DAYS"

FROM > *Dara Morad, Withernsea*

You'll probably disagree with me, but they just aren't making games like they used to. I mean, take Nintendo for example. Its ill-fated N64 had some fantastic games: *Zelda*, *Mario*, loads by Rare, including my favourites, *Perfect Dark* and *Conker's Bad Fur Day*.

My point is that if Microsoft had a games company like Rare that was devoted to churning out masterpiece after masterpiece, Xbox would go down in history as the best console of all time.

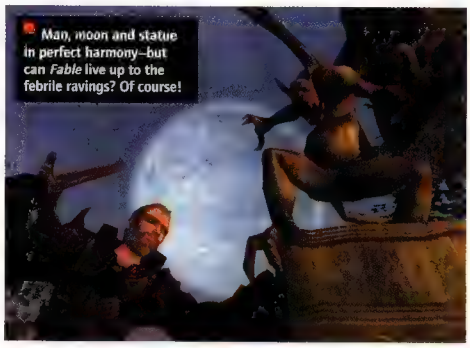
How delightfully prescient (see p14 for more on Rare and Microsoft). Of course, having Rare on board is no guarantee of success (otherwise we wouldn't be talking about the ill-fated N64), but personally I'm looking forward to seeing some Rare titles on Xbox; *Blast Corps* for me, please. And wasn't it just great to see Nintendo throwing its toys out of the pram in a 'We don't want Rare anyway 'cuz they SMELL' kind of way?

"EGO MANIA"

FROM > *Andy Barlow, email*

Why is there hardly any information around about *Project Ego*? What I have managed to find sounds amazing and in my opinion it looks as if the game's going to kick *Final Fantasy*'s ass. Most of the info I find about it is in **XGamer**, but is all of this stuff being mooted possible in the game? Finally, has there been a release date confirmed yet?

***Fable*, I think you mean. And, yes, it definitely has the potential to be the greatest thing ever. As to whether all the promised features will transpire... I'd hope so, but development's a fickle beast and sometimes things just don't pan out the way you expect. Still, I have faith that when *Fable* appears it'll be so bursting with loveliness that if there's anything missing, it'd be rather churlish to point it out. Release date? A vague '2003'. But you can't rush these things, can you?**



Man, moon and statue in perfect harmony–but can *Fable* live up to the febrile ravings? Of course!

BURNING QUESTIONS

All your 'box troubles sorted. But what about those more personal issues, eh?

I'm soon getting NTL broadband on the 128kbps service. Do you know if this will be any good for Xbox Live when it kicks in and if the modem has an ethernet port? If it doesn't, is there any other way to connect to the Xbox still using the same service?

FROM > *Nagarius*

Stop! NTL is one of Microsoft's key partners for Xbox Live in the UK, but Gatesy is stipulating a minimum connection speed of 256K, so you need to shell out. I took a quick check around and, yes, the NTL cable modem appears to have an ethernet port, although you might want to check with NTL before they come round and set everything up. And, hey, if you're confused about broadband, then you've probably flipped straight past our broadband feature this month. Turn back to page 105.

Can you tell me what the cheapest ADSL or broadband subscription is, because I want to get Xbox Live.

FROM > *Erinejamaal Kadafi*

The cheapest broadband deal I've seen so far is Virgin.net, with a monthly fee of £24.99 (plus £40 sign-up and you have to buy your own broadband modem). But there's a raft of other options in our aforementioned broadband feature, so check it out.

Will it be possible to rip CD-Rs with DVD Region X? I had heard it might be.

FROM > *Colin Noakes*

I'd be extremely surprised if that were the case. My Xbox doesn't want to know about CD-Rs at all. I've tried to play them and the best it can come up with is the standard message about how the disc is scratched or damaged, and it won't change its mind, no matter how much I shout at it. I can't see how Region X would make the slightest bit of difference.

Interestingly, my DVD player won't recognise CD-R either, so I reckon it's more a hardware than software issue.

Didn't Microsoft say before its launch that the Xbox would allow you to play all-region games if the developers don't to put the encryption in their software? Or was I hearing things?

FROM > *John W*

Yes, they did. Come to think of it, I distinctly remember being in an over-hot meeting room at ECTS and having J Allard say this to my face just two years ago. In fact, I probably still have his words on a MiniDisc somewhere. But like all splendid ideas that come into contact with commerce, it seems to have died a death.

There may well be a hidden all-region option on the Xbox, but no-one, especially not Microsoft, seems inclined to use it. However, the official line from Mr Allard at XO2 in Seville was that multi-region titles are still an option.

XGAMER credits

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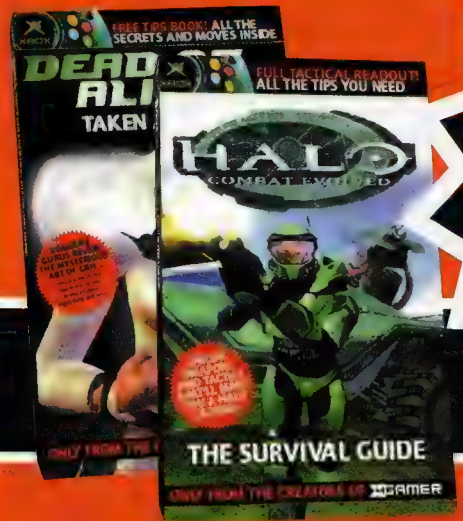

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MENTAL CASES

But is it Art? **XGamer** reveals the bizarre world of case modification, for when an off-the-shelf console just doesn't express The Real You.

THE GLOWING JEWEL

Gimmick It Glows
Creator Pheaton

Let's face it, when we first saw pictures of the retail Xbox unit, we all imagined that the jewel logo on the top of the case was going to glow an unholy green when switched on. It would hypnotise people with a message of "Play me... Plaay meee..."

But all we got was this cheap plastic disc. Which, for some people is just not good enough, and that's why those with the know-how have actually taken to modifying their consoles. An LED under the jewel is currently one of the most popular 'case mods' to involve a solder job. But one serious modder in the States, Pheaton (aka Gareth Powell) wanted to go one step further. Commissioning a new smoked acrylic glass cover and buzz-sawing off the metal shielding inside, Pheaton introduced two miniature cooling fans and a set of LEDs to illuminate the interior workings. The cherry on the icing was a jewel insert, made from electro-luminescent sheeting, to exude a menacing pale green after lights-out.

The result? An Xbox that maintains the original colour scheme, but twists it into something chilled and hi-tech. You don't know whether to play it or dance around it.

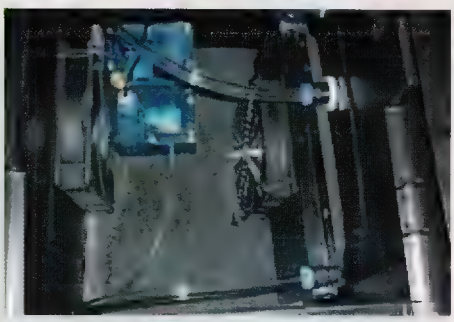
THE WATER-COOLER

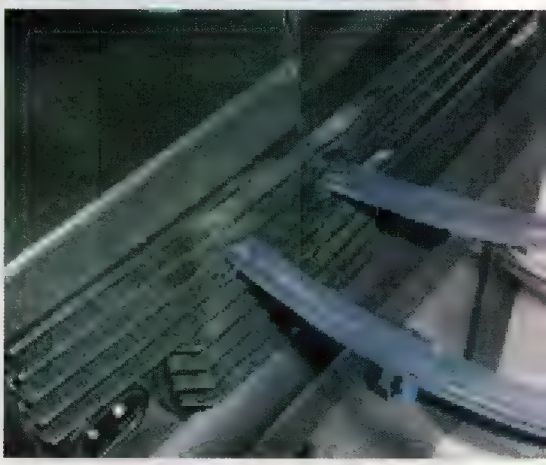
Gimmick It's Wet, And Yet Dry
Creator HardOCP

It's all about being cool. Electronic components generate heat when used for long periods, but this can interfere with the performance of more sensitive items on the circuit board—like chips, and especially processors. Despite the electric fan it can get pretty sweaty inside your Xbox, so one owner has taken the drastic next step and introduced PC cooling technology that pumps cold water safely around the motherboard inside sealed pipes and heatsink blocks.

The creator claims to have achieved a clean, professional installation that leaves the Xbox without any permanent alterations so that it may be easily returned to its original condition. "No ghetto installation, no use of epoxy to attach a crappy home-made water block, and no zip ties or wire and bubblegum tricks." Guaranteed.

There's only one question. Why bother? We've sometimes left machines running for hours and didn't notice any obvious failures through overheating. We suspect the answer probably has more to do with trying to look big and clever, but we'll eat our words if an especially long summer session ends in game crash tears. That'll teach us rank amateurs who don't know how to cryogenically cool our Xbox in liquid nitrogen.





BLUE HEAVEN

Gimmick The Heaviest Console In The World Just Got Heavier
Creator [H]amhouke

How about a complete change of colour scheme? [H]amhouke (aka Anthony Stanley) opted for a design that did away with the tres '80s green and black altogether. In its place sits a solid steel X, polished to be as reflective as chrome, that dominates the top of the casing. It's also highly reminiscent of the 'silver X' prototype Xbox that announced the console to the world in April 2000, (see p55 of The Insider's Xbox Handbook for a pic).

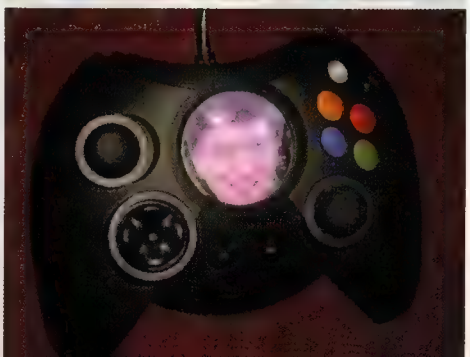
The modder's favourite lighting trick, electro-luminescent film, is cut out and shaped to make the insets glow in a cool blue. Sadly, you can't see the holographic effect of an underlit foil X suspended in Plexiglas that makes up the new jewel. But it's the attention to detail that gives away a true case mod pro, and this model boasts a replacement front light in thematic blue to replace the usual green LED encircling the eject button.

CONTROL MODS

Gimmick He's Not Human!
Creator porkchop.4mg.com

There's no point in coming up with a new colour scheme if the joypads clash with your creative vision. Besides, there's less to go wrong with modding your pads, in the sense that you're only throwing away £30 rather than £200 when the damned thing refuses to work on reassembly. So controllers have proved a popular starting point for budding case modders, from simple repaints (make sure you buy a paint that can be used on plastic, though) to ambitious patterning and LED underlighting of the facia gem.

We couldn't ignore the wonderful Bill Gates Mega-Controller, though. Switch it on and the Supreme Overlord of Megalosoft reveals his true nature, his demonic eyes lighting up in a soul-withering red. Zoiks.



PAINT JOBS

Gimmick No Two Look Alike
Creator Various

The simplest possible case mod is to paint it and sticker it, though even this can prove stunningly complicated. (But, of course, it has to. In the modding community, just slapping on some modelling acrylic and nail varnish with a brush is akin to hanging a sign around your neck that reads "Newbie Loser, Please Kick Me".)

No, the serious modder insists that if it doesn't totally invalidate the warranty then it is isn't really a worthy mod. So the first step is to unlock those hex-head screws (use a hair dryer to heat the screw hole labels and then gently peel them back), open the case and prise out the delicate components. The modder then applies masking tape to the Xbox shell to keep the important holes and features clear, before indulging in as many coats as it takes for a clean and level spray-painting.

With interesting results, it must be said, although artistic talent sometimes take a back seat to technical achievement.

HARD CASES

The practice of case modding first appeared in the world of PC fandom, when people with an artistic flair and more time than life, began dedicating themselves to souping up the dull tower casing of their computers. True, most PCs are ugly beige breeze-blocks with all the aesthetics of a punch in the face. It's no coincidence that these tat-magnets accumulate miniature shrines of monitor juju, all of those cheap or freebie toys, photos of you and random friends doing zany things and furry souvenirs that would look tasteless decorating any other piece of household furniture. The thing needs covering up!

Ever since the serious modders started posting pictures of their hotrod hardware on the Net, though, an inevitable edge of competitiveness has crept into the pursuit. There's even a Consummate Case Competition (C3), held regularly at Dallas gaming conventions. Check out the galleries on www.pheatonforums.com/phpBB2/ for everything from cool, minimal designs to the most outrageous crimes against colour co-ordination. There's an Xbox forum, too.

Whatever you do, though, don't ask if they're just trying to make their PCs and consoles look like iMacs. They *really* hate that.

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A waste of time and money? Or is your Xbox an expression of individuality? If so, send us pics!

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SPLINTER CELL

Find out why Snake is a dead man!

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GIZZA JOB

Want to be a roving videogame scout, spotting hot new development talent? Then you want this bloke's job...

Name Joe Booth
Age 31
Company Bam
Job title Development Director
Working on *Reign Of Fire*
Previous Projects *Ecks Vs Sever, Driven, Broken Sword* and *Chase*
Perks of the job Flying around the world and meeting the best development and creative talent it has to offer.

Being a development director is about Going out and find exciting new games for Bam. This involves negotiating contracts and overseeing all aspects of Bam's European development. Once a game is signed, it's my responsibility to ensure it's of the highest quality—and, of course, fun to play. It's also down to me to ensure that development teams meet their deadlines.

Big break My big break happened when I was 15 years old and still in school. Having taught myself to program, I was offered a contract from Elite to convert *Ikari Warriors* from the arcade to the C64.

Best thing It can be really stressful at times, but there are many perks to my job. I get to meet and hang out with some of the best creative talents that the industry has, and meet people that have really crazy off-the-wall ideas. I think from a production point of view, everybody would love to be in a position where they can put the kind of games they want to play on the shelves—which I do.

Worst thing The hours, the junk food... and the bar bills. It's also quite stressful at times. Millions of dollars of Bam's money are spent based on the decisions that I make, so they need to be the right ones or the whole company suffers.

What's required A nose for great titles, an eye for detail and the balls to take risks are the most important things, but I couldn't do what I do if I didn't understand the way that each aspect of the development and publishing process works. Having worked my way up through the ranks and spent so much time in the development community, I can really empathise with problems that come up and figure out how best to solve them.

Last word Challenging and tough at times, but hugely rewarding.

WORKING 9-5

THE DD DAY
JOE'S TYPICAL DAY

9am
10am
11am
12pm
2pm
3pm
3.30pm
4pm
4.30pm
7pm

XGAMER JOB CENTRE

WANTED: DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

We are looking for a development director to co-ordinate and manage all aspect of our software development. The right person for the job will already have proven themselves successful within a producer role and is looking to move up the ladder.

WOULD SUIT: Someone who's well organised and very imaginative, and can see what makes a game good or bad.

SALARY RANGE: From £35K to £100K.

WHAT NEXT: If you're already an accomplished senior producer and have a CV that shines like gold, charge into a company's board of directors meeting and pull up a chair. They might not ask you to leave.

PART 10 > PROJECT EGO CHANGES NAME BUT NOT COURSE. INTRODUCING...

FABLE

NAME> Dene and Simon Carter

JOB> Co-owners of Big Blue Box

"Matt's ideal evening in would involve a chloroformed Miyamoto, some premium rubber matting and a bumper pack of tissues."

Dreaming of a game

Imagine for a moment that you have all the money you need to make your dream game. You have all the textures and 3D models you're ever likely to need, unless you're making the computer game version of Deep Space 69. You have a fantastic graphics engine capable of drawing everything beautifully and at high speed. On top of all this, you have the most talented team of programmers ever to grace God's clean earth, who are so eager to start work they've permanently Velcroed themselves to their computer terminals, always ready for action. Everything is ready for you to make your perfect game.

What bits of gameplay would you work on first?

This is the first and, possibly, the most important question any game developer worth its salt will ask itself. In general, the priority is to work out which aspects of the game's design are fundamental in making it fun, playable and unique, and start with those. Ideally, once you have these elements of your game in, you will have something that is at least moderately representative of the final version, and you can start playing with it.

As experienced developers, we've obviously asked ourselves these difficult questions with ~~*Project Ego*~~ *Fable*. Unfortunately, as experienced developers, we've also all got our own very different ideas as to what's the most important thing.

Chloroformed Miyamoto

Ask Matt, and he'll point out that Miyamoto got the *Mario 64* team to focus on how Mario moved and 'felt' to the player, to the extent that Mario started off as a simple sphere, rolling across a platform environment. His point is well made, since the 'feel' of a game is critically important. Then again, Matt's ideal evening in would involve a chloroformed Miyamoto, some premium rubber matting, a syringe of saline solution and a bumper pack of tissues.

On the other hand, Simon will claim that trying to play this game without having developed the artificial intelligence for all the people in our world is a fundamental brain-wrong. In *Populous* and *Black & White*, for example, the AI of the villagers was a top priority, and absolutely key in giving the player a sense of freedom and power in the environment. This is exactly what we are trying to capture for *Fable* and so Simon is, as usual, annoyingly correct.

Thankfully, at that moment Leroy usually silences Simon with a short jab to the back of the head. He then points out that it is the action in games like *Onimusha* and *Devil May Cry* that make them "the best bloody games ever". He will then argue, vociferously and at considerable length in the direction of no one in particular, that without our combat and 'magic' systems being completed we will never get a real feel of what it is like to play *Fable*.

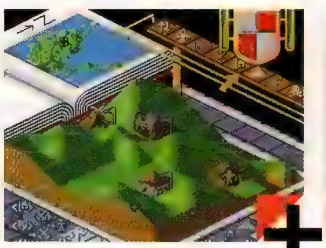
Drinking your own

It's usually at this point that we realise that Angus has been talking throughout all of this. As our resident RPG head, he will point out that any RPG worth playing will have a top-notch storyline to keep the player interested and give the whole thing a sense of depth. Trying to develop the game without the story, he will say, is like weeing into an oncoming gale with your mouth wide open.

The interesting thing here is that they are all right. One of the problems with working on an action-simulation-stealth-'em-up-RPG with a proprietary magic system is that all of these elements are pretty much equally important. Certainly, one of our biggest development challenges so far has been having to work on all of these big, difficult areas of the game simultaneously, just so we can get a true impression of the full flavour of the thing.

In times like these we try to remember Dene's rousing developer battle cry to keep our spirits up— "Next time, we're doing a f***ing golf game."

MARIO...
A game must 'feel' right



POPULOUS...
Top AI empowers the player

ONIMUSHA...
The combat system must rock like Gibralter.

FABLE

WIN! THE MOST POWERFUL CHAIR SINCE THE ELECTRICAL BUM MELTER

You'll think you're a king basking in driving heaven.

WIN!
POD-IUM 1 GEAR, AN XBOX AND RALLISPORT CHALLENGE UP FOR GRABS

1ST PRIZE

'Pork Scratchings'

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

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Postcode _____ Email _____

Whack your wit into the white blobs, then cut the form out with any sharp object you can lay your hands on. Send it to that address over on the right. The XGamer one.

Tick this little box if you don't want any offers info sent your way ☐

Readers Most Wanted Chart

While you're sending your ace laughs from your house to Bath, why not tell us which five games have had you slavering like a dog that's found its way into a leg morgue.

1 _____
2 _____
3 _____
4 _____
5 _____

We all love a bit of pant-tearing videogame racing. But how real does it feel sat on a stool tapping buttons on a joypad? About as real as an inflatable sex doll's touch or a Pot Noodle's taste. Racing games scream, "You'll think you're really driving a car!" Eh? Not quite. In reality, you're kneeling down on your carpet giving it fingers on the triggers. Unless you've got a POD-IUM 1 unit, that is. As far as top chairs go, it's like our Highness' throne with a wheel on the front and some pedals near the feet. It's crap for *Tetris Worlds*, but with *Project Gotham*, *Colin McRae Rally 3* and *Sega GT 2002*, it's more satisfying than finding a double barrelled shotgun down the back of your shirt while someone's trying to mug you. Now one of you (it could be you, really) is going to win one.

The grand prize comprises the full POD-IUM 1 unit, an Xbox and a copy of *Rallisport Challenge* for you to get all four-wheeled-up with. The two who pull in second will bag the front unit (the steel frame, wheel and pedals) and the next three in line take delivery of the wheel and pedals. That's six winners in all, which gives you odds of just 5833/1.

The competition's easier to enter than a prostitute. That naughty *Hitman*'s back on the scene–this time he's toddled off to the countryside for a spot of stress relieving r&r. And it seems Miss Piggy is about to find out just what Mr 47 has in mind...

We want to know what the Hitman's chat-up line was, and how it went down (if anything was to go down, urgh!). But before you enter, ponder these questions: Do you laugh along with Robert Lindsay's "My Family"? What about Ardal O'Hanlon's "My Hero"? If so, best not waste your time entering (or living). If you can't fathom how such foulness crawls onto the box, then you're on our wavelength. Bang your quotes on the speech bubbles, cut the form out and send it to...

The 'Pork Scratchings' Compo

XGamer Magazine, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW

Or if licking the back of the Queen's head makes you want to scream in horror, email your hilariousness to:
xgamer@fxmi.com

- **Closing date 12 November 2002**
- **Winners will be announced in XGamer 12, which goes on sale 9 December.**

The Rules...

No purchase of XGamer is necessary. The work experience monkey's decision is final. No correspondence will be entered into. No employees of Future Publishing or companies involved in the competition, or bald, genetically engineered hitmen are permitted to enter. There is no cash alternative to prizes; it's up to you to pawn them. No more than five entries per person. Failure to observe this strict limit will force the XGamer Capo to send an agent round to force you to read *all* of the rubbish entries, before measuring you up for some concrete shoes.

issue 98 caption compo
the final winners...

3RD PRIZE

2ND PRIZE

WIN! THE BEST DRIVING EXTRAS SINCE PINK FLUFFY DICE!

"FIST OF GOD"

Frankly, we're shocked, but then considering your previous form we should have expected it. Maybe a picture of innocent, fluffy kittens for you to caption next month...

Yet again, you have surpassed yourselves with your ability to turn a smutty picture into an even smuttier caption. Still, we bring it on ourselves by giving you such an image to work with, and you can be assured that the **XGamer** bod who grabbed it has been shipped out for 'reprogramming'. But after the hundreds of "I've lost my keys/mobile/remote/contact lens..." jokes and steak/stake puns had been discarded, disinfected and destroyed, among the unreadable, the unprintable and the just plain rubbish were these works of art. Read and enjoy...

THE WINNER! Many praises to Graham Egan of Manchester who bags 500 quid's worth of neighbour-bothering, glass-breaking Videologic Digitheatre DTS, providing quality sound and more bass than you can shake a really big, bassy stick at.

Also, congratulations to the runners-up, who provided captions that were funnier than Darren Day's attempts to convince us that he was 'street' (When's the garage remix of *Living Doll* released, Dazzer?). Each of these accomplished fellows will receive a splendid Videologic Digitheatre ZXR surround sound kit, worth 150 of Her Majesty's finest pound coins. Let the filth commence...

Stripy: "Are you sure this is how you play Twister?"
Buffy: "Well, the pointer does say right hand, brown spot."
Lee Walmsley, Bolton.

Stripy: "Wow! (hic) That was some party—but what was everyone doing with your hand and the superglue?"
Buffy: "Don't ask!"
Matthew James, Telford.

Buffy: "At least Gordon the Gopher was easier to lift."
Stripy: "I hope this isn't going live."
Allen Davis, London.

Stripy: "The budget for this new vet programme sure is cheap."
Buffy: "Shut up and keep mooing."
Jason Thompson, Email-land.

Well done, all. Now I'm off to have a shower. I feel dirtied...

INSPECT-A-GADGET

So *this* is how fine the line between brain-itching genius and pant-splattering madness can be...

Judging by your entries, it seems that the spark of inspiration, that moment when a beer mat doodle becomes an idea which turns ordinary men into millionaires, still burns as brightly as when the concept of an inflatable dartboard was born. And you also managed to disturb all at the **XGamer** office into the bargain (which isn't as easy as it sounds).

Not that your efforts were inspired by the need to make the world a better place. Oh no. You mercenaries were inspired by the possibility of blagging a TV, an Xbox and a year's worth of playtesting the freshest ideas to come out of the caffeine-soaked, swollen brains of Joytech's elite boffins (as well as a heap of Joytech stuff).

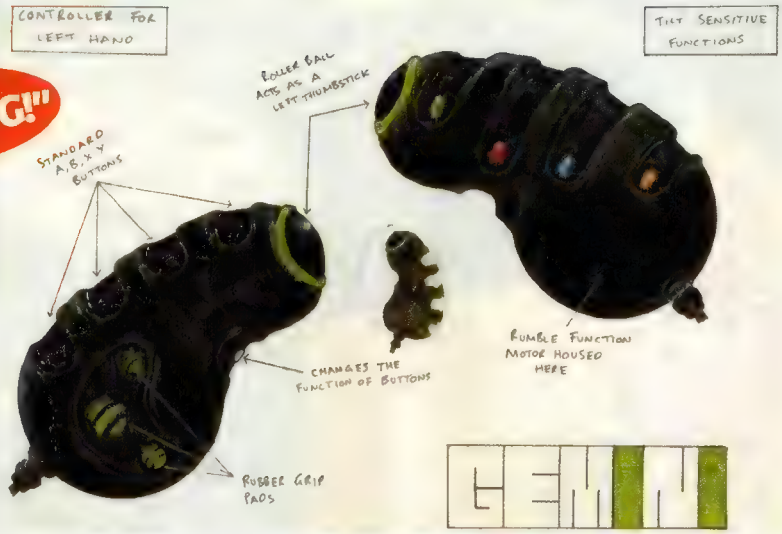
Among the bizarre and the frankly disgusting (as well as those who tried to sway us with flattery, sob stories and a metro ticket, you know who you are) were ten gems and one idea of such unbelievable genius, it made us weep. And so the top boffin award goes to... Graeme Adamson from Bridge of Weir.

Observe and be filled with the wonder of human invention. Mad scientists of the world, we salute you.

runners up GEMINI Boffin: Matthew James, Cardiff

"CUNNING!"

A two-piece controller. The left unit is tilt-sensitive to control movement, while the right is a light-gun. Why hasn't anyone thought of this before?



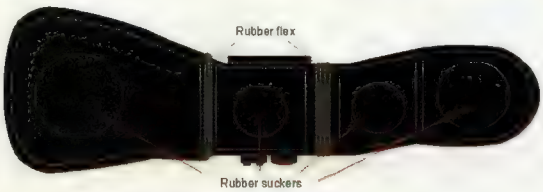
runners up XBOX PINTMASTER Boffin: 'The Dempsters', Email-land

"CRAFTY!"

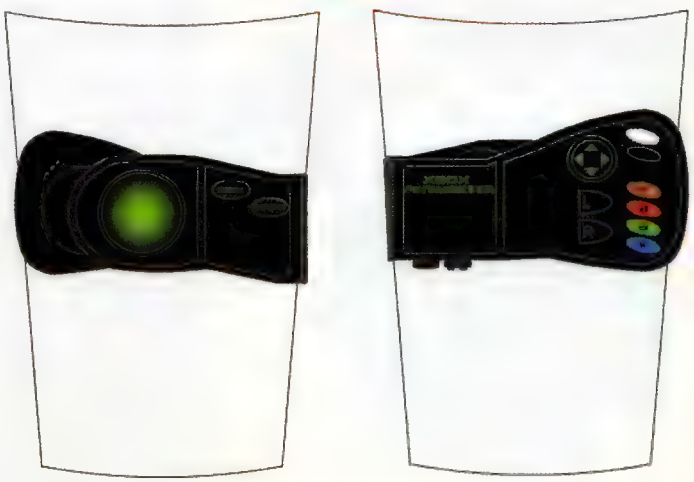
It seems we're not the only ones with sneaky friends who muller us when we go for a crafty swig of glass-bound sunshine...

Front view

Back view



Examples of use



Fits onto pint securly ensuring spillage free gaming

first prize

THE MARATHONIZER 2000 Boffin: Graeme Adamson, Bridge of Weir

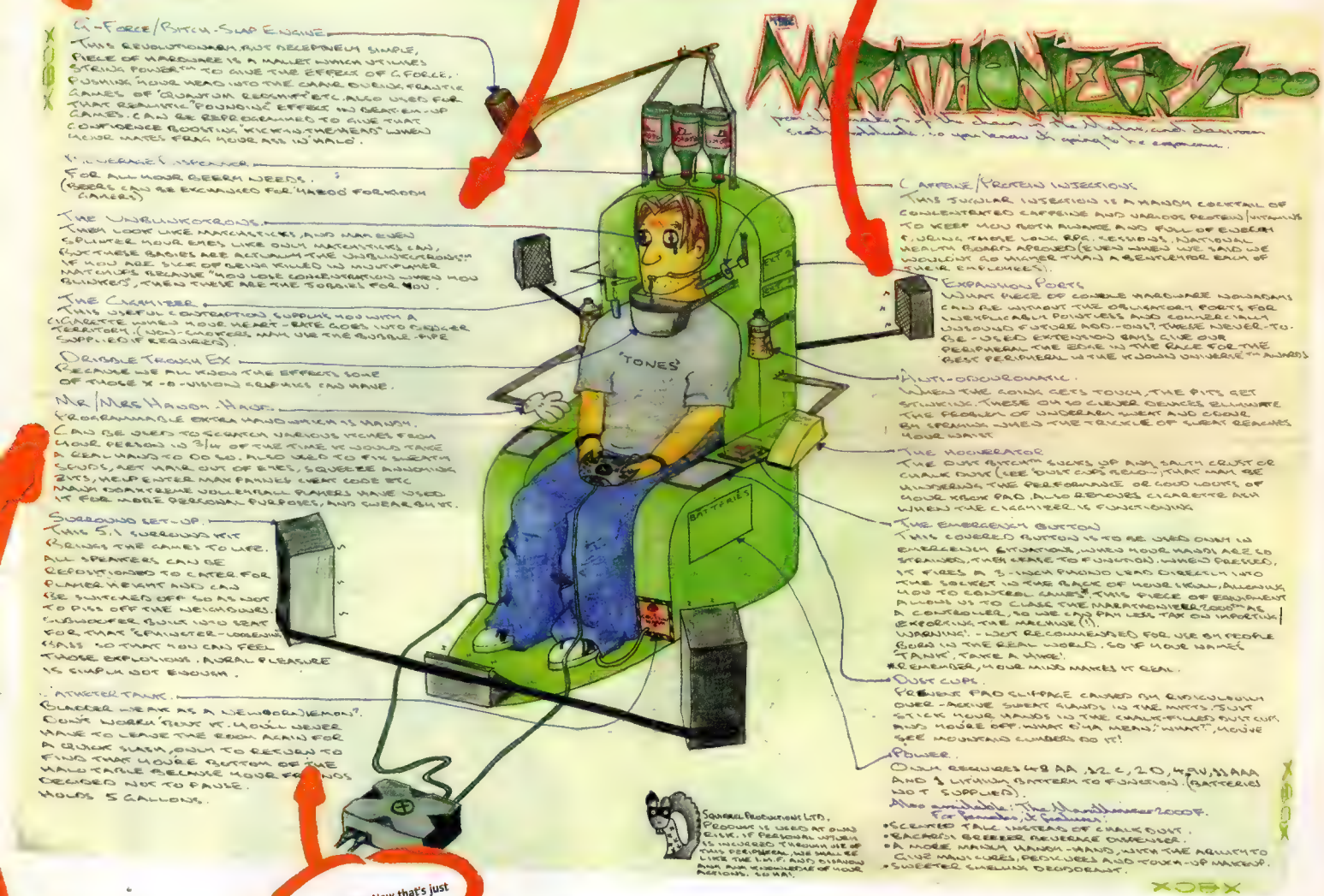
XGamer's gadget of choice is this behemoth of a chair, designed for surviving those ridiculously long *Halo* sessions that we all get dragged into (especially when those shelves need putting up). Graeme thoroughly deserves a TV, an Xbox, heaps of Joytech hardware and the chance to test the best inventions they can offer.

"EUREKA!"

G-Force/ Bitch Slap Engine: "utilises String Power™ to give the effect of G-force..." Applications could be diverse. Want to really feel that stinging haymaker in *Rocky*? Fancy ducking next time a Warthog lands on you in *Halo*?

The Unblinkotrons: "If you are sick of being killed in multiplayer match-ups because 'you lost concentration when you blinked'..." Allows you to recreate your favourite *Clockwork Orange* moments.

Expansion Ports: "What piece of console hardware nowadays can be without the obligatory ports for inexplicably pointless and commercially unsound future add-ons?" Slander!



Mr/ Mrs Handy Hand: We didn't ask... and didn't really want to know. Perhaps it's some sort of cleaning device that makes sure your room stays dirt-free while you play. That must be it...

Catheter Tank: Now that's just getting a bit silly. Yep, we love it.

SO NEAR AND YET SO FAR...

Runners-up who also each win a bag of Joytech swag (plus a name mention for the best of the rest).

First off, those crayon-cunning runners-up: **Sam Hodgson,** Sutton Coldfield; **Garry Deavall,** St Albans; **Cliff Russell,** Email-land; **Nathan Gray,** London; **Tom Pritchard,** Chislehurst; **Stephen Way,** Wolverhampton; **Callum MacBeth-Seath,** St Albans; **Mark Cable,** Colchester. Congrats, one and all– Joytech merchandise is on its way...

Much kudos to the following for their ambitious efforts, which didn't quite make the final selection but still tickled our quality organ: **Michael Griffith,** Washington; **Jessica West,** Bosham; **Janet Budden,** Langport; **Nathaniel Taylor,** Chesterfield; **Billy White,** Kilmarnock; **Tommy Hart,** Middlesex; **Joel Pigou,** Earl Shilton; **Stanislaw Giedroyc,** Limerick City; **Marc Shinner,** Wednesbury.

badvert
Made by Mr J Nash

X-KLUB! MEMBERSHIP PACK

ZOINKS!
IT'S YOUR OFFICIAL X-KLUB! MEMBERSHIP PACK

HI! I'm Big X, one of the support programmers of the Xbox bootstrap sequence. That's right—the way your Xbox shifts microcode drivers into the BIOS to upload the dashboard UI so you can play great games like *Halo*—that was partly me! Congrats on joining X-KlUb! It's the funnest club for the funnest multimedia entertainment system there is. Have some funnest fun cutting out your FREE gifts. Bye!

Big X

Your membership number is **7 7 3 4**

SEKRET X-KLUB! KODE!

Memorise and destroy the secret code so you can decipher important messages from X-KlUb! HQ!

a = 5 b = 81,922,300 c = Q etc.

TODAY'S SECRET MESSAGE!

3 25 901 / G 11 11 x / 87 43,009 010 / bairn / 1 4 4 1 6,272,518 / R v B B T 9 / 717 13 88 717 / iii h IX / 00101101 / N

I ♥ HALO

PET SHIRT 6000

Use this as a template for your own pet T-shirt!

HALO IS GEAR!

HI! I'M

Official XBOX Kernal DRM Developer Conference

I KEENLY ANTICIPATE HALO 2

BIG X'S JOKE BOMB

BIG X SAYS: Disguise yourself as our spiritual leader, Uncle Bill[X]. Simply hold the page against your eyes and cut out these authentic specs, in accordance with Uncle Bill[X]'s wise maxim, "Character and triumph are built through adversity and facial agony." **Disguise does not confer powers of attorney.**

MESSAGES TO X-KLUB! MEMBERS

Jim Flasks: Sorry, eight copies of *Halo* is nowhere near the record. **W Brepp:** You're right, it sounds like your joypad is broken. Buy another Xbox. **Member Number 9914:** Components of rifle in location F; money wired to your Swiss bank account. **Bernard Smoak:** Learn the end-of-level boss's patterns and avoid his attacks. Easy! **D Yohelmaha:** Thanks, I'll pass your brother's details to our copyright re-education division. **N Earp:** Your wasted time will be refunded. **OO Boques:** The activation code was a misprint, please disable your mustard-gas device. **Member 666:** I cannot understand, you are too faint. **Tim Zounds:** I am sorry for your parents that you do not like *Halo*. **C Smith:** Your drawing of me playing my Xbox was ace! Hope to see you at the roadshow on Saturday! **Member 7012 ("Sam"):** You failed to give your full name on the application. We do not tolerate failure in this organisation, 7012. **Varney McElks:** That's an impressive high score. Well done! **Members 71 to 133:** Carry out your orders. Your Xbox loves you.

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OTHER GAMES

A = 01
Abe's Odysee
Ace Combat 4: S. Skies
Advance Wars
Age of Empires 2
Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline
Airblade
Alex F's Player Man. '02
Alex F's Player Man.2001
Alien Resurrection
Alien Trilogy
Alone in the Dark 4
Alundra
Alundra 2
Amerzone
Army Men 3D
Army Men RTS
Army Men: Land Sea Air
Army Men: Lock & Load
Atlantis
Atlantis 3: New World

B = 02
Baldur's Gate: Dark All.
Banjo Kazooie
Banjo Tooie
Batman Vengeance
Blade
Blood Omen 2
Blood Wake
Blue Stinger
Breath of Fire
Breath of Fire 4
Broken Sword 1
Broken Sword 2
Buffy The Vampire Slayer
Burnout

C = 03
C&C: Red Alert
C&C: Red Alert 2
C&C: Retaliation
C&C: Tiberian Sun
C.Bandicoot: W.of Cortex
C-12 Final Resistance
Champ. Manager 2002
Chase the Express
City Crisis
Code Veronica X
Command & Conquer
Commandos 2
Commandos B E Lines
Conflict Zone
Cossaks: European Wars
Crash Bandicoot
Crash Bandicoot 2
Crash Bandicoot 3
Crash Bash
Crash Team Racing
Crazy Taxi
Cricket 2002

D = 04
D. Nukem: Time to Kill
Dark Cloud
Dave Mirra BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
Dead or Alive 2
Dead or Alive 3
Delta Force: U. Warfare
Destruction Derby Raw
Deus-Ex
Devil May Cry
Die Hard Nakatomi Plaza
Die Hard Trilogy
Digimon Digi. Card Bat.
Digimon World
Digimon World 2
Digimon World 3
Dino Crisis
Dino Crisis 2
Disc World 2
Discworld Noir
Disney's Dinosaur
Doom
Dracula Last Sanctuary
Dracula Resurrection
Dragonball Z: Final Bout
Draken: Ancient Gates
Driver
Driver 2
Dropship
Duke Nukem: L.of Babes
Dune
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 3

E = 05
Ecco the Dolphin
Eden, Project
Eighteen Wheeler
Empire Earth
Enclave
Escape Monkey Island
Eve of Extinction
Evil Dead
Extermination
Extreme G 3

F = 06
FA PLgue F'ball Man.'00
Fear Effect
Fear Effect: Retro Helix
FIFA 2001
FIFA 2002
Fifa World Cup 2002
Fighting Force 2
Final Fantasy 10
Final Fantasy 6
Final Fantasy 7
Final Fantasy 8
Final Fantasy 9
Final Fantasy Anthology
Fire Blade
Freekstyle
Frontline (M. of Honor)
Fur Fighters

G = 07
G1 Jockey
Galerians
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
Genma Onimusha
Godai: Elemental Force
Golden Sun
Goldeneye
Gotham Racing
Gran Turismo
Gran Turismo 2
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo Concept
Grand Theft Auto
Grand Theft Auto 2
Grand Theft Auto 3
Gravity Games

H = 08
Half Life
Halo
Harry Potter
Headhunter
Hidden & Dangerous
Hitman
Hogs of War
Hunter: The Reckoning

I = 09
In Cold Blood
Int. Superstar Soccer 2
Italian Job

J = 10
J.Bond: Agent Under Fire
Jak & Daxter
James Bond: T.W.I.N.E.
Jedi Knight 2
Jedi Power Battles
Jurassic Park: Lost World

K = 11
Kessen 2
Knockout Kings 2002

L = 12
Legacy of Kain
Legends of Wrestling
LMA Manager 2001
LMA Manager 2002
Lost Kingdoms
Louvre: The Final Curse
Luigi's Mansion

M = 13
Mafia
Mario Kart Super Circuit
Martian Gothic
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX
Max Payne
Maximo
Medal of Honor
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor Underg.
Medal of Honor: All. Ass.
MediEvil
MediEvil 2
Men in Black
Men In Black 2: Alien Esc.
Metal Gear Solid
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club
Mike Tyson Boxing
Mission Impossible
Monkey Island (Escape)
Monsters Inc
Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Mummy Returns
MX 2002
MX Rider

N = 14
Necronomicon
No-One Lives Forever

O = 15
Oddworld: M's Oddysee
Oni
Onimusha: Warlords
OO7 Agent Under Fire
Operation Winback

P = 16
Parasite Eve 2
Pikmin
Pirates: Leg. of Black Kat
Pokemon Blue
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Red
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Premier Manager 2000
Premier Manager 99
Prisoner of War
Pro Evolution Soccer
Project Eden
Project Gotham Racing
Project IGI
Project Zero

R = 18
Rainbow Six
Rallisport Challenge
Rayman
Rayman 2
Red Faction
Res. Evil: Code Veronica
Res.Evil: C. Veronica X
Resident Evil
Resident Evil 2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Return to C. Wolfenstein
Robot Wars
Rogue Leader
Roller Coaster Tycoon
Rune: Viking Warlord

S = 19
S Palmer's Snowboarder
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights
Shadow Hearts
Shadow Man 2
Shadow of Memories
Shadowman
Silent Hill
Silent Hill 2
Sim City 3000
Simpsons Wrestling
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sims House Party
Sims Livin' It Up
Sims on Holiday
Smackdown 2
Smackdown! 3: J. Bring It
Smash Court Tennis
Smugglers Run
Smugglers Run 2
Soldier of Fortune
Soldier of Fortune 2
Sonic Advance
Sonic Adventure
Sonic Adventure 2 Battle
Soul Reaver
Soul Reaver 2
Soviet Strike
Spec Ops: Covert Assault
Spec Ops: Stealth Patrol
Spiderman
Spiderman 2
Spiderman The Movie
Spy Hunter
Spyro 2: Ripto's Rage
Spyro 3: Year of Dragon
Spyro the Dragon
SSX Tricky
Star Trek: Elite Force
Star Trek: Invasion
Star Wars Jedi P Battles
Star Wars Jedi Starfighter
Star Wars: Jedi Knight 2
Star Wars: Phantom M.
Star Wars: Racer
Star Wars: Rogue Leader
Star Wars: Star Fighter
State of Emergency
Stuntman
Summoner
Super Mario Advance 2
Super Smash Bros Melee
Syphon Filter
Syphon Filter 2
Syphon Filter 3

T = 20
Tekken 3
Tekken 4
Tekken Tag Tournament
The Mummy Returns
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The World is not Enough
Theme Hospital
Theme Park World
This is Football 2002
Thunderhawk: Op.
Time Splitters
TOCA Race Driver
Tomb Raider
Tomb Raider 2
Tomb Raider 3
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tomorrow Never Dies
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Tony Hawk's S'boarding
Tunguska
Turok 2
Turok: Evolution
Twisted Metal Black

U = 21
Urban Chaos

V = 22
Vagrant Story
Vampire Night
Vanishing Point
V-Rally 3

W = 23
Warcraft 3: R. of Chaos
World is not Enough
World's S. Police Chases
Worms Armageddon
WRC: World Rally Champ
Wu Tang:Taste the Pain
WWF No Mercy
WWF Smackdown 2
WWF Smackdown 3 J.B.I.

X = 24
X-Files
X-Squad

Z = 26
Zelda
Zelda: Majora's Mask
Zelda: Oracle of Ages
Zelda: Oracle of Seasons
Zoo Tycoon

0-9 = 27
007 Agent Under Fire

X-BOX

A = 01
Agent Under Fire
Aggressive Inline Skating
Air Force Delta Storm
All Star Baseball 2003
Amped Snowboarding
Arctic Thunder
Azurik: Rise of Perthia

B = 02
Batman Vengeance
Blade 2
Blood Omen 2
Blood Wake
Bond: Agent Under Fire
Bruce Lee: Quest Dragon
Buffy Vampire Slayer
Burnout

C = 03
C.Bandicoot: W.of Cortex
C.Edwards' Inline Skating
Cel Damage
Champ. Manager 2002
Circus Maximus
Commandos 2
Crash
Crazy Taxi 3: High Roller

D = 04
Dark Legacy
Dark Summit
Dave Mirra BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
Dead or Alive 3
Dead to Rights
Deadly Skies

E = 05
Elder Scr. III: Morrowind
Enclave
ESPN Int.Winter Sports'02
ESPN NBA Tonight 2002
ESPN NFL Primetime 02

F = 06
F1 2001
F1 2002
Fifa World Cup 2002
Freestyle Snowboarding
Fusion Frenzy

G = 07
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
Genma Onimusha
Gotham Racing
Grand Heat
Gun Metal
Gun Valkyrie

H = 08
Halo
High Roller - Crazy Taxi 3
Hunter: The Reckoning

I = 09
Int. Superstar Soccer 2
Int. Winter Sports 2002

J = 10
J.Bond: Agent Under Fire
Jedi Star Fighter
Jet Set Radio Future

K = 11
Kabuki Warriors
Knockout Kings 2002

L = 12
L. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
Legend of Black Kat
Legends of Wrestling
Loons: Fight For Fame

M = 13
Mad Dash Racing
Madden NFL 2002
Max Payne
Mike Tyson Boxing
Morrowind
Moto GP
Munch's Oddysee
MX 2002

N = 14
Nascar Heat 2002
NASCAR Thunder 2002
NBA 2K2
NBA Inside Drive 2002
NBA Tonight 2002
New Legends
NFL 2K2
NFL Blitz 2002
NFL Fever 2002
NFL Fever 2003
NFL Primetime 2002
NHL 2002
NHL Hitz 2002
Night Caster

O = 15
Obi Wan (Star Wars)
Oddworld: M's Oddysee
Off Road Wide Open
Onimusha Genma
OO7 Agent Under Fire
Outlaw Golf

P = 16
Pirates: Leg. of Black Kat
Prisoner of War
Project Gotham Racing

R = 18
Rallisport Challenge
Raw - WWF
Reckless: Yakuza Missions
Red Card Soccer 2003
Rise of Perathia - Azurik
Road Rage

S = 19
Shadow of Memories
Shrek
Silent Hill 2
Simpsons: Road Rage
Slam Tennis
Smashing Drive
Spiderman The Movie
Splashdown
Spy Hunter
SSX Tricky
Star Wars - Obi Wan
Star Wars Jedi Starfighter
Star Wars: Star Fighter
Street Hoops

T = 20
Test Drive: Overdrive
Test Drive: Wide Open
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The Thing
Tony Hawk's 2X
Tony Hawk's 3
Transworld Surf
Turok: Evolution

U = 21
Ult. Fight. Champ: Tapout

V = 22
World Cup 2002
World Series Baseball
Wreckless: Yakuza Miss.
WW2: Prisoner of War
WWF Raw

0-9 = 27
007 Agent Under Fire
2002: Fifa World Cup
4x4 Evolution 2

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PlayStation.2
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